Tuesday, January 20, 2026 No 20 ₹7

www.deccanherald.com Follow us on @deccanherald

DH

DECCAN HERALD

The Power of Good

Jaishankar delivers blunt message to Poland

Says don't help fuel terror infra in our neighbourhood

Page 5

State

Time will answer everything: Shivakumar on becoming CM

P.3B

World

Trump links Greenland threat to Nobel Peace Prize snub

P.10

Nation

Publish WB 'discrepancies' list: SC to EC P.8

World

39 killed in Spanish train collision P.10

NEW
RENAULT KIGER
now with new GST advantages

3 YEARS WARRANTY

RE-021-LT

100 ps turbo top variant at ₹9.14 L*

multi-sense drive modes

ventilated leatherette seats

enhanced X-tronic CVT

*the prices mentioned above are ex-showroom prices for the Emotion Turbo MT variant as per new GST reforms and are exclusive of local taxes. all Renault vehicles now come with a standard warranty of 3 years or 100 000 km, whichever comes first. the price/features mentioned in this advertisement may vary depending on the model/variant and features in the car. the final price valid will be the one on the date of purchase. corporate/PSU/defence personnel/government employee/professional benefits applicable on each model are basis eligibility of the customer and based on submission of required proof by the customer. for detailed terms and conditions, please visit www.renault.co.in

Renault recommends Castrol

renault.co.in

SHOWROOMS: KARNATAKA: BENGALURU: RENAULT **BANNERGHATTA ROAD** Ph: 9289220872, RENAULT **MYSORE ROAD** Ph: 8527240549, RENAULT **SILK BOARD** Ph: 8527240654, RENAULT **WHITEFIELD** Ph: 8527240685, RENAULT **JP NAGAR** Ph: 8527240626, RENAULT **KALYAN NAGAR** Ph: 8527236137 & 8722866664, RENAULT **SARJAPURA** Ph: 8448481374, 8746811000 & 8496915111, RENAULT **YELAHANKA** Ph: 8527234592, RENAULT **YESWANTHPUR** Ph: 9311832962. RENAULT **TUMKUR** Ph: 8527234251.

SYNDICATE FINANCE

www.syndicatefinance.in

LICENSED ENTITY

Estd. 1977

BUSINESS LOAN

Against mortgage of immovable property

Long Term & Easy Instalment Facilities.

Pioneering a New Era of Smart Lending for Corporates & MSMEs

Scan For Details

(022) 6581 0001 / 3565 7754 / 3565 7941

E-mail : info@syndicatefinance.in

428, Rawal Bldg. No. 1,
1st Floor Lamington Road,
Mumbai-400 004

Contact : 11 am to 5 pm

DH
DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Nitin Nabin elected unopposed as BJP prez

The 45-year-old is the youngest ever to occupy the post

Page 5

Quickly

DGP in soup after 'sleaze' video goes viral

A video purportedly showing DGP K Ramachandra Rao in a compromising position with several women inside his office went viral on Monday. The footage allegedly shows Rao hugging and kissing the women while in uniform.
Details on Page 4

'By 2030, India to be upper middle-income'

India is likely to become an 'upper middle-income' country by 2030 with per capita income rising to over $4,000 from the current around $3,000, the SBI said. As per the World Bank, India is in the 'lower middle-income' group.
Details on Page 11

Decide on WC by Jan 21: ICC to BCB

The International Cricket Council has asked the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to decide on its participation in the T20 World Cup in India by January 21 or "risk being replaced by another team" in the tournament beginning Feb 7.
Details on Page 14

B'luru to vote via ballot papers for civic polls

SEC says elections to 5 city corporations between May 25 and June 30

BENGALURU, DHNS

The paper ballot is all set to make a comeback in Bengaluru after 25 years with the State Election Commission (SEC) deciding to do away with the use of electronic voting machines (EVMs) in the upcoming elections to the five municipal corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority.

Noting that developed countries like the US use ballot papers, the commission argued that there is no bar on the use of ballot papers either in the form of a law or court orders.

State Election Commissioner GS Sangreshi told reporters that the commission took the decision of using ballot papers on its own. "There are two best practices in a democratic world. One, the use of EVMs and the other, the paper ballot system. Both are proven methods. Since the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act allows the use of either paper ballots or EVMs, we have decided to go with paper ballots this time," he said, adding the elections will be held after May 25 and before June 30.

In the last two civic body polls (2010 and 2015), Bengalureans had exercised their franchise using EVMs. Former councillors say the last time ballot papers were used in a municipal election in Bengaluru was in 2001.

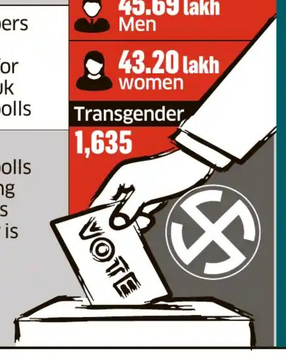
Unlike previous elections, ballot would also be introduced for zilla and taluk panchayat polls.
▸ Ballot, Page 3B

Back to paper

In two previous civic polls (2010, 2015), Bengalureans voted on Electronic Voting Machines

- Last time paper ballots were used in Bengaluru civic polls was in 2001
- Ballot papers will also be introduced for zilla and taluk panchayat polls
- Gram panchayat polls are held using ballot papers as one voter is allowed to vote for multiple candidates

88.91 lakh voters in 5 city corporations
45.69 lakh Men
43.20 lakh women
Transgender **1,635**



There are two best practices in a democratic world. One, the use of EVMs and the other, the paper ballot system. Both are proven methods. Since the Greater Bengaluru Governance Act allows the use of either paper ballots or EVMs, we have decided to go with paper ballots this time

GS Sangreshi
SEC

Panchayat polls in May-June

Panchayat elections in Karnataka will be held in May or June, the SEC announced on Monday, adding that the calendar of events for the much-delayed polls will be finalised once the state government completes the delimitation of boundaries and reservation matrix.
Details on Page 3B

India & UAE boost ties with strategic defence partnership

ANIRBAN BHAUMIK
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With tensions between Abu Dhabi and Riyadh escalating over Yemen, India and the United Arab Emirates signed a Letter of Intent for a strategic defence partnership agreement on Monday, just four months after a similar pact between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan raised hackles in New Delhi.

The move by New Delhi and Abu Dhabi to go for a strategic defence partnership is intended to send out a message to both Islamabad and Riyadh after they signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted UAE President Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who was on a visit to New Delhi lasting less than two hours.

The two leaders highlighted their deep respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the importance of strategic autonomy, according to a joint statement issued after they held a meeting.
▸ India & UAE, Page 3B

PM Narendra Modi with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan. PIB/AFP

1.6 lakh BC, minority students in distress sans scholarship

BCW dept blames finance dept; min says relief soon

R SHRINIDHI
DHARWAD, DHNS

As many as 1.6 lakh eligible students haven't received the Karnataka government's post-matric scholarship for backward classes and minority communities in the last two academic years, with several students expressing fear that the prolonged delay could force them to discontinue their studies.

According to government data, overall 16.17 lakh students applied for the Backward Classes and Minority (BCM) scholarship in the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years. While 13.91 lakh applicants were found eligible, 12.31 lakh of them received the amount, leaving out around 1.6 lakh students.

Among them, the scholarship of 31,413 students have been pending for the academic years 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26. Another 1.28 lakh students haven't received the same scholarship for the years 2024-25 and 2025-26.

> Each time, officials assure me that the amount will be released shortly. It has been more than 18 months, and I am struggling to manage college and hostel fees
>
> **MAHADEV,** a student

For the 2025-26 academic year, 5.18 lakh students have applied for the scholarship till December. The scrutiny of these applications is yet to be completed.

Beneficiaries of the scholarship include students pursuing PUC, degree and PG courses across the state.

The Backward Classes Welfare Department said the Finance Department was yet to release funds for disbursing the scholarships.

Under the post-matric BCM scholarship, the government provides Rs 15,000 per year to each eligible student. Those belonging to nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are eligible for an additional Rs 4,000.
▸ Scholarship, Page 3B

BCM post-matric scholarship

Academic yr	Applicants	Eligible	Beneficiaries	Left out
2023-24	8.04L	7.40L	7.08L	31,413
2024-25	8.13L	6.51L	5.23L	1.28L
Overall	16.17L	13.91L	12.31L	1.6L

RECORD HIGH

Jewellery stores rise in city on silver surge

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

With silver prices touching record highs, businesses are starting to mushroom in Bengaluru, particularly in popular shopping hubs like Malleswaram and Jayanagar, to capitalise on the demand for the metal.

Stores specialising in silver jewellery are estimated to have doubled in the past year. And for good reason. On Monday, silver prices surged to a historic high of Rs 3.05 lakh per kg.

"Customers are expecting prices to continue rising and reach record heights, unlike ever before," said Goutham Badera, proprietor of Panchkesari Badera Jewellers. "Hence, there is a lot of investment buying, which is silver bars and coins."

With three stores in the city, Badera has increased the silver stock at its outlets.
▸ Silver, Page 3B

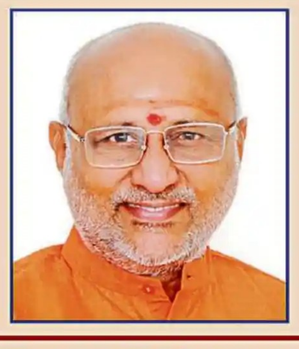
Silver prices to spike 20%

Silver prices are likely to go up over 20% in the next few months as demand for the white metal is surging exponentially due to a strong investor and bullish global sentiment.
Page 11

Padmabhushana, Karnataka Ratna, Basavashree Awardee,
Trividha Dasohi, Maha Shivayogigalu, Paramapoojya
Dr. Sree Sree Sree Shivakumara Mahaswamiji's

7th Year
Commemoration Ceremony

21-01-2026 Wednesday, 11.00 A.M.
Sree Siddaganga Math, Tumakuru



Inauguration by :
Shri C.P. Radhakrishnan
Hon'ble Vice-President of India

Hearty Welcome to the participating Pontiffs, Political Leaders,
Dignitaries, Sree Math's Devotees - Well Wishers and the Public

All are Cordially Invited

Special Request : Please do not bring Hand Bags, Water Bottles, Camera and Mobile Phones

Siddaganga Institute of Technology
Dr. Sree Sree Sivakumara Mahaswamiji Road, Tumakuru

THUMBAY INTERNATIONAL PATHWAY PROGRAM

ADMISSIONS OPEN 26-27

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE (MD) PROGRAM IN
POLAND - ITALY - MALAYSIA - ULAN UK - AMERICAS
UZBEKISTAN - ROMANIA - GHANA
THROUGH GULF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, UAE

3 Years Study in Gulf Medical University, UAE
+ 3 Years Study in selected International Universities

جامعة الخليج الطبية
GULF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
WHERE THE WORLD COMES TO LEARN

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF LUBLIN, POLAND
UNIVERSITY OF LANCASHIRE UNITED KINGDOM
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF THE AMERICAS ST. KITTS & NEVIS
SABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE THE BOTTOM, CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS
ST. MATTHEW'S UNIVERSITY CAYMAN ISLANDS
FERGANA MEDICAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH UZBEKISTAN
VITA-SALUTE SAN RAFFAELE UNIVERSITY, ITALY
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
UMFST ROMANIA
ROYAL VETERINARY COLLEGE, UK

POLAND UK MALAYSIA ITALY
UZBEKISTAN GHANA ROMANIA ST. KITTS & NEVIS

We offer highly affordable fees starting from just 16 lakh INR onwards *
*T&C Apply

جامعة الخليج الطبية
GULF MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
WHERE THE WORLD COMES TO LEARN

THE BIGGEST MEDICAL UNIVERSITY IN THE GULF

+971 6 7431333 +971 56 5495755
pathway@gmu.ac.ae Ajman, United Arab Emirates

THUMBAY GROWTH THROUGH INNOVATION SINCE 1997

College bus mows down woman, 8-yr-old son in Viveknagar

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 37-year-old woman and her 8-year-old son were killed on the spot after being mowed down by a private college bus on Viveknagar main road in central Bengaluru on Monday morning, police said.

The victims are Sangeetha and Parth, residents of Ejipura. The tragedy occurred at around 7.15 am, when they were on their way to Army Public School, where Sangeetha was employed, and Parth was a student.

A senior police officer said the accident took place when Sangeetha was attempting to cross the busy road along with her son. A speeding private college bus struck them with such force that both succumbed to their injuries instantly.

Following the accident, the bus driver abandoned the vehicle and fled.

The Ashok Nagar traffic police registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, seized the college bus and later arrested driver Sunil S. The bodies were shifted to Bowring hospital for post mortem.

Exhibition on metal forming from Jan 21

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers' Association (IMTMA), the apex body of the machine tool industry, will organise IMTEX Forming 2026 at Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC) from January 21 to 25.

Billed as Asia's largest exhibition on metal forming and manufacturing technologies, the event will feature over 600 exhibitors from 20 countries across four exhibition halls.

The six-coach trainset at the Hebbagodi depot.

8th Yellow Line train reaches city

BENGALURU, DHNS: The eighth train for Namma Metro's Yellow Line arrived at the Hebbagodi depot on Monday morning, officials in the know said.

The six-coach trainset was dispatched on trailers by Kolkata-based Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd (TRSL) on January 8. After completing the mandatory 750-km trial run on the mainline, the train will enter passenger service around mid-February.

The 19.15-km RV Road-Bommasandra metro line, which opened on August 11 last year and connects the tech hub of Electronics City, currently operates with seven trains at a peak-hour frequency of 10 minutes. The eighth train is expected to reduce the peak-hour frequency to eight minutes.

GBA publishes draft electoral rolls; B'luru has 88.91L voters

Enrolment, changes in voter list allowed till Feb 3: SEC

BENGALURU, DHNS

Following the Supreme Court ruling to conduct elections to the city's five municipal corporations by June-end, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) on Monday published the draft electoral rolls, listing a total of 88.91 lakh voters as eligible to exercise their franchise.

The State Election Commission (SEC) announced that the window to enrol as a voter or request corrections in the electoral roll will be open until February 3.

Addressing a press conference here, R Ramachandran, Special Commissioner (Election), GBA, said the electoral roll would be published on the GBA's official website (gba.karnataka.gov.in/home) in a day's time. He said that Booth Level Officers (BLOs) would visit houses over the next 13 days when citizens can submit claims and objections. The final electoral roll will be ready on March 16.

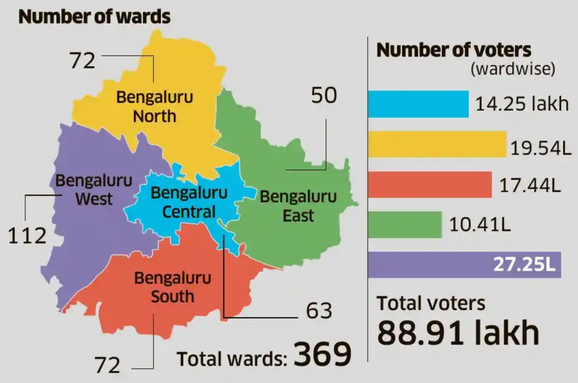
Of the 88.91 lakh voters, 45.69 lakh are men and 43.20 lakh women. About 1,635 voters are transgender persons. The electoral roll covers 369 wards and five municipal corporations of Bengaluru, which were earlier known as Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). There are a total of 8,044 polling booths across the city.

"The draft voters' list has been published for the purpose of conducting elections to the greater Bengaluru area. Citizens can look for their names on the electoral rolls. If the names are missing, there is an opportunity to apply," G S Sangreshi, State Election Commissioner said at the joint press conference.

As per the electoral roll, Ward No 23 of Bengaluru West Municipal Corporation has the most voters at 49,530 while Ward No 16 of Bengaluru East Municipal Corporation has the fewest at 10,926.

The GBA has requested all registered and recognised political parties to appoint booth-level agents in all 369 wards and help the BLOs in registering the eligible voters on the electoral rolls.

IN MODIFICATION MODE



Application forms

Form-4	For adding the name of the voter
Form-5	Objection to adding the name
Form-6	For correction of the name
Form-7	For change of location
Form-8	For removal of the name

Helpline numbers

- Bengaluru Central: **080 22975803**
- Bengaluru North: **080-22975936**
- Bengaluru South: **080-26566362/ 9480685704**
- Bengaluru East: **9480685706**
- Bengaluru West: **9480685703**

Sewage water has been flowing back into homes in KAS Officers' Colony and Bank Officers' Colony in BTM Layout 2nd Stage for a year now, residents say.

Sewage flows back into homes in BTM Layout, residents alarmed

BENGALURU, DHNS: Residents of BTM 2nd Stage in southern Bengaluru say sewage water has been flowing back into their homes for at least a year now.

The issue cropped up in KAS Officers Colony and Bank Officers Colony (BOOHBCS) after Namma Metro took up works in the locality. "Heavy vehicles deployed by the BMRCL damaged the infrastructure in the area. We have been chasing BWSSB officials for a solution but there has been no improvement," said a representative from the Spandana Nagareeka Vedike, the registered Residents' Welfare Association (RWA) representing BOOHBCS.

Residents fear that the backflow of sewage into homes and roads could trigger a health crisis in the area.

"In December 2025, even without rains, Silk Board Junction and our area were flooded with sewage. This contaminated our drinking water supply and has led to a massive surge in mosquito breeding, posing a direct threat to public health," another resident said.

According to sources in the BWSSB, the water board has decided to upgrade the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) at Madiwala Lake from 4 MLD to 75 MLD, helping resolve the issue to a great extent.

That apart, the board also intends to take up some pipeline repairs.

Residents also pointed out that poor coordination between the BWSSB and Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) had delayed the work on ground.

"Every time we ask BWSSB officials, they say they have not received permission from the GBA to take up road-cutting works. There is hardly any coordination," an RWA member said.

BWSSB officials said that they would look into the issue.

Pothole crash leaves techie needing surgery and months of recovery

BENGALURU, DHNS

A senior IT professional's commute turned into a prolonged battle with pain and medical expenses after his scooter hit a deep pothole in Mahadevapura, once again drawing attention to the city's failing road infrastructure.

Sridhar Mudooru suffered a serious shoulder fracture when he lost control of his scooter on CDP Road connecting Varthur and Panathur on January 12. The stretch falls within the Mahadevapura Assembly constituency, an area that has seen repeated complaints over road conditions even as the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) maintains that thousands of potholes have been repaired across the city.

Doctors have advised Sridhar to undergo surgery costing more than Rs 1.25 lakh, followed by at least two months of complete rest. Full recovery, he has been told, could take over six months.

"This road has not been repaired for several months. I use the Outer Ring Road daily for work. Had the authorities fixed this stretch in time, the accident could have been avoided," said Sridhar. "Apart from the financial burden, I now have to live with constant pain for no fault of mine," he added.

Sridhar said the traffic situation in the Varthur–Panathur belt leaves residents with few options. "Everyone knows how heavy the traffic is here. The roads are simply not adequate for the population density. A seven-kilometre drive can take one-and-a-half hours. That is why I chose to use a scooter, even though I already have back pain," he said.

Citizen groups argue that the incident is symptomatic of deeper, long-standing issues in the constituency. Jagadeesh, an activist with Varthur Rising, said road conditions in the area have been poor for nearly two decades. "We have consistently flagged these problems to multiple authorities. Flooding, crumbling roads, and silt accumulation have only worsened the situation. Despite repeated requests, the response has been largely lackadaisical," he told *DH*, adding that officials often address only a fraction of the issues raised.

Administrative transition adds to delays

Clement Jayakumar, member secretary of the Mahadevapura Task Force, said the transition to the GBA has further complicated matters. "With the change in governance structure, officer roles have been altered. For ongoing projects, there is very little monitoring at present. Accountability is unclear, which affects both the pace and quality of work," he said.

He also pointed to the lack of training for officials now handling multiple responsibilities. "Earlier, there were separate engineers for roads, lakes, and stormwater drains. Now one officer is expected to manage all these sectors, often without adequate training," he said.

Frustrated by continued inaction, citizen groups organised a cleaning and awareness drive near the accident spot on Saturday. Their demands included a dedicated annual road maintenance plan for key arterial roads across Balagere, Gunjur, Varthur, Panathur, and Sarjapur; mechanised removal of roadside silt; urgent resurfacing of major stretches, including SH-35; and regular public disclosure of road maintenance budgets and expenditure.

Woman files plaint as bank staff 'leak' a/c info to estranged hubby

'Rumours spread at workplace, forcing me to resign from job'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Police have booked three staffers of ICICI bank for illegally accessing, downloading and sharing a woman's account statements with her estranged husband.

The woman told police that Kavya Koli, her relationship manager at Malleswaram branch, Chetan J and Sarthak Ray, working for ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, Koramangala, were behind the leak.

The woman, who works for a private company, was stunned when her estranged husband submitted her account statements at a court hearing. She later learnt that the bank employees had accessed, downloaded her bank statements and shared them with third parties without her consent.

The couple got married in May 2021, but later encountered marital disputes. They have been living separately. She has filed a dowry harassment case and a city court is hearing the matter.

During the hearing on August 18, 2025, her account statements were shared by email, violating banking norms and customer privacy.

The woman complained to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and received a compensation of Rs 25,000, she told *DH*.

"My concern is about trust, privacy and accountability. Though I never applied for or enquired about any insurance policy, I was shocked how Chetan and Sarthak accessed my account details. I had opened the account one and a half years after filing a case against my husband. What is more disturbing is that while compensation was paid, no clarity was given on what action was taken against employees involved. I was told it was an internal matter, but those employees continue to work as usual. As a customer, I have the right to know how my confidential information was accessed and by whom," she said.

"Initially, there was reluctance to register an FIR, and only after I approached higher authorities was a case registered," she said.

"The misuse of my banking data did not stop at privacy breach. My workplace was contacted, rumours were spread and I was subjected to harassment that ultimately forced me to resign from my job. If this can happen to me, it can happen to any bank customer. This is why I believe the issue is not just personal, but a serious public concern, about how private banks handle customer data and how easily it can be misused".

After registering a zero FIR at Koramangala station, the case was transferred to Malleswaram station.

"Notices have been issued to all suspects to ascertain their role in the alleged data breach," a police officer said.

Married man who cheated techie with 'promise of marriage' held

BENGALURU, DHNS: A 32-year-old man, who allegedly cheated a software engineer of Rs 1.53 crore by promising to marry her and concealing from her that he was married, has been arrested, police officials said.

Vijesh B alias Vijay Raj Gowda, 32, a civil engineer from Kunigal, met the 29-year-old woman via a matrimonial platform in March 2024. He introduced himself as a successful businessman with a wealth of Rs 715 crore. He also claimed himself to be owner of a company called VRG Enterprises.

He later introduced the woman to his father Boregowda. He also introduced her to his wife Soumya, whom he falsely claimed was his sister. He later claimed that his funds were frozen due to an Enforcement Directorate (ED) probe and asked the woman to bail him out by lending him money.

He borrowed Rs 1.75 crore from the woman but only returned Rs 22 lakh. When she demanded the rest, he allegedly threatened her. She discovered his marriage and deceit when she visited his house.

"He is married to Soumya and has a child. We are currently investigating whether his wife and father, who were named in the FIR, following the police complaint, were also involved. If the involvement is found, appropriate action will be initiated against them, too," an investigating officer told *DH*.

OFF WITH EYESORES

Greater Bengaluru Authority workers remove posters and banners on Sanjaynagar main road in Bengaluru on Monday. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

India AI Impact Summit-2026: Presence: Shalini Rajneesh, Organiser: Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms and Indian Institute of Science, venue: A V Rama Rao Auditorium, Indian Institute of Science (IISc), 9.30 am

South India Socialist Conference: inauguration by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Justice Sudarshan Reddy to preside over, organiser - Socialist Study Center, Samajwadi Samagama, venue: Kondajji Basappa Hall, Scouts and Guides Campus, Palace Road, 10.30 am

Free Legal Service: Seminar on Status, Challenges and Justice for Women: inauguration: H. Shashidhar Shetty, Organiser: Development Education Service (DEEDS), Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Para Legal Facilitators Collective, venue: Rest House, 18, Infantry Road, 10.30 AM

Jal Shakti Hackathon: inauguration by Subhasish Tripathi, Organiser: Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, venue: Auditorium of the Department of Civil Engineering, UVCE, Jnanabharati, 11 am

ART

Tejaswi Drama Festival: Staging of play Krishne Gowdana Aane, Rangadarshan Kala Kendra, organiser: Horticulture Department, Kannada and Culture Department, K.P. Poorchandra Tejaswi Foundation, venue: Lalbagh, 5 pm

Jaimini Bharata of Lakshmisha: Lecture by Pavagada Prakasha Rao, orgaiser: Pavagada Prakasha Rao Amrita Mahotsava Samiti, venue: Srirammandiram Patti Hall, N R Colony, 5.45 pm

Ameerbai Karnataki Play: Directed by Belur Raghunandan, presented by Ranga Badbu Trust, Organiser Bhagavataru Cultural Organisation, Venue: Kalagrama, Mallathahalli, 7.15 pm

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	29.0°C
Minimum	15.0°C
Rainfall	--
Humidity	75%
Sunset (Jan 20)	6:14 pm
Sunrise (Jan 21)	6:46 am
Moonrise	7:00 pm
Moonset	7:00 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

MD in Anaesthesiology can be designated doctor under NDPS rules: High Court

AMBARISH B
BENGALURU, DHNS

An MD in Anaesthesiology will qualify the requirements of a registered medical practitioner under rule 2(iv)(ib) of the NDPS Rules and can be nominated as the designated doctor, the High Court of Karnataka has held.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj ruled this while allowing a petition filed by the Indian Society of Anaesthesiologists (Mangaluru branch), Nursing Home and Hospital Managements' Association, Mangaluru, and Mangala Hospital and Mangala Kidney Foundation, Mangaluru.

Mangala Hospital had filed an application with the assistant drugs controller for renewal of licence for registered medical institutions under rule 52(O)(1) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Rules.

The rule requires institutions seeking recognition as registered medical institution (RMI) for possessing, dispensing or selling essential narcotic drugs for medical purposes.

The application was rejected on the grounds that the doctor who had been designated, though being an MD in anaesthesiology, did not possess any certificate of training in pain relief and palliative care for opioid dependence treatment.

The petitioner's counsel contended that an MD in anaesthesiology necessarily undergoes structured and mandatory training in pain management, palliative care and opioid-based therapy, including clinical use of narcotic analgesics.

However, the government argued that as per the NDPS rules, a medical practitioner should have undergone training in pain relief, palliative care, etc to possess, prescribe and dispense essential narcotic drugs.

H Shanthi Bhushan, Deputy Solicitor General of India, appearing for the union government, submitted that MD (anaesthesiology) is a recognised postgraduate qualification under the National Medical Commission (NMC), inherently satisfies the requirement under Rule 52N of the NDPS Rules and that no additional training is required.

He also placed the opinion of Dr Atul Ambekar, professor, National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre, and department of psychiatry, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

Justice Govindaraj said the clarification issued by the narcotic commissioner said the curriculum ensures that MD (anaesthesiology) graduates are equipped to handle essential narcotic drugs, responsibly aligning directly with the objectives of Rule 52-N of the NDPS rules and there is no requirement for a separate certificate beyond the postgraduate degree.

"If such a requirement is imposed, it would result in imposing undue regulatory burden, potentially hindering access to essential pain relief contrary to the intent of NDPS Amendment Act, 2014, which prioritises medical availability of opioids," Justice Govindaraj said.

The court directed the assistant drugs controller, Mangaluru, to consider the qualification of the nominated doctor in the case at hand as meeting the requirement and to issue the necessary certificate of registration.

DH DECCAN HERALD
Please contact for subscription/ service queries
(late receipt, non receipt or irregular supply of newspaper)
: 9008366666
: support@deccanherald.co.in

2026. My Year.
My Time. My Travel.
Mera Veena World hai na...
It's my go-to when I need time for me.
For years, I postponed. Work came first. Family came first. Budgets got in the way. But not anymore.
In 2026, I'm choosing myself. I'm challenging time, priorities, and fear. And I'm stepping out to travel, to explore, to feel alive.
Whether it's cherry blossoms in Japan, snowball fights in Europe, the highest point in Leh, or dune bashing in Dubai...
this time, it's my moment. My journey begins now with
Women's Special
tours around the world
India's largest movement of women-only tours to explore the world fearlessly, joyfully, and affordably.
With 100+ thoughtfully curated women-only tours, a Tour Manager from Mumbai to Mumbai, room-sharing partner guarantee, all-inclusive pricing from just ₹ 25,000, and the entire Veena World team by my side, I know I'm in trusted hands. So...
Jab Mann Kare, Bag Bharo, Nikal Pado!
With Veena World, around the World.
This Women's Day, make travel your resolution.
Join women across India who have chosen Veena World, and are so glad they did.
Over 100 curated women's special tours.
Let's Celebrate Women's Day 8th March
Tashkent 79000 5 Days-Feb 10 Mar 3-81000
Kerala 25000 4 Days Mar 6
Vietnam 138000 8 Days Mar 4
Shimla Manali 36000 6 Days Mar 7
Australia 335000 9 Days Mar 4
Rajasthan 39000 6 Days Mar 4
veenaworld.com

Explore Veena World's all-inclusive group tours across India and the world at veenaworld.com

Choose from Ex-Bengaluru/Mumbai departures or Joining & Leaving (J&L) tours from any city in India or abroad. The price chart below lists: • Ex-Bengaluru/Mumbai price (includes airfare, visa & insurance) • J&L price (excludes airfare, visa & insurance). Need help with your J&L travel? Our team is here to assist with flights, visas, & more.

Until April, all Veena World sales offices remain **Open on Sundays**

Women's Special Tours

Tour Name	Ex-Mumbai
Swiss Paris Austria Germany (6D) Mar 13	150000
Europe (10/11/15) Apr 27/ May 7 / May 1	285K-410K
Japan (7D) April 5	295000
Singapore Thailand Malaysia (10D) Mar 3	175000
Thailand (4D/6D) Mar 6 / Mar 4	50K-77K
Vietnam Sapa Phu Quoc (7D) Mar 3	125000
Sri Lanka (6D) Mar 4	69000
Bhutan (9D) Mar 1	90000
Dubai Abu Dhabi (5D/7D) Mar 4 / Mar 7	95-135K
Leh Ladakh (7D/9D) May 23 / May 8	73-87K
Kashmir (6D) Mar 4	47000
Dalhousie Dharamshala Amritsar(8)Mar 5	50000
Sikkim Darjeeling Gangtok (7D) Mar 4	65000
Ayodhya Varanasi Mathura Vrindavan(11) Mar 5	70000
Bhubaneswar Puri Konark Chilika(6D)Mar 3	49000
Indore Ujjain Mandu (5D) Mar 3	39000
Rajasthan (8D/8D) Mar 6 / Mar 7	45K-49K
Kerala (6D/8D/10D) Mar 4/Mar 4/Mar 5	39K-64K
Andaman (7D) Mar 4	75000

Australia NZ America Africa

Tour Name	Ex-Mumbai	J&L
Australia (7D/9/10/11/13/15)	225K-515K	150K-440K
New Zealand (10D/15D)	290K-495K	200K-400K
Australia New Zealand(11/17D)	350K-565K	250K-465K
USA East & West Coast with Orlando & Bahamas Cruise (19D)	740K-765K	615K-640K
USA East & West Coast with Chicago (13D)	535K-560K	410K-435K
USA California Carnival+Death Valley & Yosemite (10D)	425K-450K	300K-325K
USA East & West Coast with Orlando Disneyland & NASA (15D)	575K-600K	450K-475K
USA East Coast / Chicago (7D/9D)	275K-330K	175K-230K
USA West Coast (7D)	--	225K-250K
USA+Death Valley-Yosemite (16D/18D)	675K-725K	550K-600K
USA East & West Coast with Chicago & National Parks (22D)	800K-825K	675K-700K
Canada Alaska (18D)	850K-875K	650K-675K
Hawaii Mexico (11D)	950000	675000
South Africa Kenya Victoria Falls (15D)	450K-460K	--
South Africa+ Kruger National Park (13D)	340K-365K	290K-315K
Mauritius Seychelles (8D)	225K-235K	--
Best of Kenya (8D)	240K-265K	192K-228K

South East & Far East Asia

Tour Name	Ex-Mumbai	J&L
Singapore Thai Malaysia(10D)	170K-185K	135K-150K
Singapore Malaysia/Bali (8D)	145K-190K	115K-125K
Singapore with Bintan (5D)	125K-135K	102K-112K
Malaysia Penang Lagkawi(7D)	142K-152K	--
Thailand (4D/6D/8D/15D)	50K-175K	30K-65K
Phuket Krabi (5D)	85K-95K	60K-70K
Hong Kong Macao Shenzhen (7D)	170K-180K	129K-145K
Vietnam (5D/8D/13D)	100K-225K	--
Vietnam Cambodia (11D)	195K-205K	--
Vietnam Bali (12D)	200K-210K	--
Japan (5D to 17D)	175K-650K	120K-595K
Japan Alpine Route (10D)	390K-400K	320K-345K
Japan Korea (10D)	375K-385K	295K-320
Japan China (13D)	400K-425K	345K-370K
Best of China (9D)	175K-225K	120K-170K
China Korea (10D)	300K-325K	245K-270K
Korea Taiwan (8D)	285K-310K	230K-255K
Best of Taiwan (5D)	150K-170K	95K-115K
China Korea Taiwan (14D)	380K-390K	320K-345K

Europe-Western, Eastern, Northern, Mediterranean

Tour Name	Ex-Mumbai	J&L
Multi-Country (6D-15D)	150K-410K	80K-330K
Multi-Country (17D-27D)	450K-695K	370K-615K
Swiss Paris London (11D)	375K-400K	290K-315K
Swiss Paris Amsterdam Brussels (11D)	335K-345K	265K-275K
Swiss Paris/Swiss Austria(8D)	275K-290K	205K-220K
Swiss Austria Italy (11D)	325K-335K	255K-265K
Switzerland (7D/10D)	275K-360K	205K-290K
England Scotland Ireland Wales (10/15D)	315K-440K	245K-370K
Scandinavia (7D/10D/15D)	250K-500K	175K-400K
Scandinavia Midnight Sun (16D)	515K-540K	435K-450K
Iceland Northern Lights(10D)	515K-545K	440K-465K
Central & Eastern Europe(17D)	400K-425K	325K-350K
Spain Portugal Morocco (16D)	375K-400K	295K-320K
Greece Turkey/Egypt(12D/15D)	350K-450K	270K-295K
Tashkent Samarkand (5D)	79K-89K	59K-69K
Baku (5D/8D)	109K-155K	--
Uzbekistan Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan (9D)	225K-250K	170K-195K
Baltic Europe Estonia Latvia Lithuania (8D)	250K-275K	180K-205K

India Nepal Dubai Sri Lanka Bhutan

Tour Name
Dubai Abu Dhabi (5D-7D)
Sri Lanka(7D/9D/11/13/15D)
Bhutan (7D/9D/12D/15D)
Nepal (5D to 13D)
Leh Ladakh (7D to 15D)
Himachal (5D to 13D)
Sikkim Darjeeling (4D to 9D)
Rajasthan (5D to 17D)
Kerala (5D/6D/8D/10D/15D
Gujarat (5D to 16D)
Karnataka (5D to 9D)
Nainital Mussoorie Haridwar / Corbett Park (6D/9D)
Assam Meghalaya / Arunachal (7D/12D)
Bhubneshwar Puri Konark (6D)
Varanasi Ayodhya Lucknow (8D)
Madhya Pradesh (5D/8D/13D)

Travel Now Pay Later!
EMI options available (3 months to 24 months) subject to EMI partner approval. T&C apply

Group tour price includes return airfare ex-Mumbai (ex-Bengaluru tour price also available), transport, accommodation, all meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner, ightseeing with entrance fees, driver-guide tips, services of a Tour Manager, VISA fee (except for Free Visa Countries & USA) and travel insurance*. J&L tours exclude airfare, visa & insurance. USA tours are for valid USA visa holders.

Jayanagar: Sharada Plaza, 9th Main Rd, 3rd block, Jayanagar, Opp. SBI, Bengaluru 560011, Call: 887 997 2217

Indiranagar: 2005, 100 feet Road, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar, Bengaluru 560038, Call: 887 997 9500

Veena World Sales Partners: Karnataka: Belgaum-College Road 9980428880 • Malleshwaram 9663920469 Belgaum-Goaves Circle 7338685500 • Bengaluru-Vijayanagar 9036610005 • Bijapur 9980857595 Dharwad 9036715969 • Hubli 7204411007 • Chikodi 9448627771 • **Tamil Nadu:** Coimbatore 9994666522

Mysore, Udupi, Mangaluru • Call: 865 575 5281

Book Online 24x7 from anywhere on veenaworld.com
Call: 1800 313 5555

Mumbai Online 887 997 2221 • New Delhi 887 997 2700 • Noida 887 997 4100 • Gurugram 8879 974 300 • Hyderabad 887 997 9700
Kolkata 887 997 2288 • Bengaluru Jayanagar 887 997 2217 • Bengaluru Indiranagar 887 997 9500 • Ahmedabad 887 997 7200 • Indore 887 997 9800

Monday-Sunday 10 to 7

Applications invited for Sales Partners/ Agents across Southern India WhatsApp on 887 997 9733

Tour price is per person and on twin sharing basis. These tour prices are nett and no discount is applicable. At the time of booking, tour price to be paid in full INR by UPI/NEFT/RTGS/Cheque, in the name of **'Veena Patil Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.'** No cash transactions at Veena World. Government taxes apply. Any increase in YQ taxes, airport taxes, VISA fees, surcharges (if any) will have to be borne by the travellers. T&C apply.

VEENA WORLD
Travel. Explore. Celebrate Life.

Body of T Narsipur RFO found in Mysuru

MYSURU, DHNS: The body of a range forest officer (RFO) of T Narasipur Social Forestry Range was found in a conservancy behind a private lodge on Mother Teresa Road (BN Road), near the Suburban (KSRTC) Bus Stand, in Mysuru on Monday.

The body of Kantaraj Chauhan (32), a native of Indi in Vijayapura district, who had been transferred to T Narasipur just 15 days ago, was found, while his friend Mallanagouda Patil, a native of Gangavathi, who had stayed with him, has gone missing. Police said that Patil had rented a room in the lodge, while Chauhan had joined him on Sunday night. "As the duo had messed up the room, in an inebriated condition, the lodge staff had asked them to vacate the room at 2.30 am. Mallanagouda Patil was not at the scene, even when the body was found," they said.

In Yelburga, it's wolves in sheep's clothing, in veggie context

They develop 'forced fetish' for watermelons as prey base shrinks

PAVAN KUMAR H
HUBBALLI, DHNS

Wolves in Koppal's Yelburga taluk have developed a liking for watermelons and have begun raiding fields where the fruit is cultivated.

Though wolves are known to be occasional consumers of watermelons — mainly for hydration and certain minerals — experts in Koppal say the canines are now feeding on the fruit regularly.

They suggest two possible reasons for this change in wolves' food habits: declining prey base and change in habitat, as dry and barren grasslands are being converted into seasonal watermelon cultivation areas, resulting in easy access to the fruit.

Experts fear the continuation of this trend could intensify conflict between wolves and farmers.

Currently, wolves face threats from shepherds, as nearly 90% of their prey consists of sheep and goats, belonging to these pastoral communities. Deccan Conservation Foundation founder-president Indrajeet Ghorpade says over the past decade there has been a noticeable increase in incidents of wolves feeding on watermelons.

Cultivation area up

"Earlier, watermelon was grown in small patches. But, with an increase in borewell irrigation, watermelon growing area has expanded. Earlier, a pack of four or five wolves would consume one or two watermelons in a day. Today, we are witnessing the same number of wolves consuming and damaging 10–15 watermelons in a single night," he says. His team, which has been studying the grassland species of Koppal region for over four decades, says wolves seem to have developed a preference for the fruit, leading to regular raids during the season.

Ghorpade says the wolf habitat in Yelburga is undergoing drastic changes due to the rise of windmills in rocky terrain and expansion of agricultural land.

This has resulted in a decline in prey base of wolves like blackbuck and chinkara.

"Although wolves continue to prey on sheep and goats, we are observing that watermelon has also become a regular part of their seasonal diet," he says, adding consumption of watermelons could be a survival strategy and part of the species evolving in response to changes in habitat.

He says his team has observed wolves feeding on other fruits as well like Indian jujube ('bare' in Kannada) and custard apple.

Honnavalli N Kumara, principal scientist at Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, who has conducted studies on wolves, said: "Meat remains the essential and necessary food for wolves. There have been incidental records of wolves eating watermelons. But if they are feeding on this fruit regularly, it indicates a lack of natural prey for the predator. Wolves are forced to consume alternative foods when availability of blackbuck, chinkara or livestock like sheep is low".

Six Naxals - Mundagaru Latha, Sundari Kuthloor, Vanajakshi Balehole, Mareppa Aroli, K Vasanth and T N Jisha - raise slogans before coming out of the forest to surrender. DH FILE PHOTO

Naxals who entered mainstream languish in prison

'Special court not set up and their demands not fulfilled'

VIJAYKUMAR S K
CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS

A year has passed since the government declared Karnataka a Naxal-free state. It has also been a year since six Naxal activists formally joined the mainstream on January 8, 2025. However, all six continue to remain behind bars even today.

Under the leadership of the Naxal Rehabilitation Committee and Shanthigagi Nagarikara Vedike, six Naxals — Mundagaru Latha, Sundari Kuthloor, Vanajakshi Balehole, Mareppa Aroli, K Vasanth and T N Jisha — returned to the mainstream in the presence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who declared the state Naxal-free.

As announced by the government, Naxals with A category cases were to receive Rs 7.50 lakh and those with B category cases Rs 4 lakh as financial assistance, to be released in three phases. Incentives were also promised for information leading to the identification of weapon dump sites.

After joining the mainstream, the six were required to face trial. Since serious cases under laws, such as the UAPA, are registered against them in Kerala and Tamil Nadu as well, they continue to remain in custody. The government had assured that it would not oppose petitions seeking joint trials.

In the 2025–26 budget, Rs 10 crore was allocated for infrastructure development in Naxal-affected areas, of which Rs 9.12 crore has been released. Incentive assistance of Rs 27.10 lakh was provided in Udupi and Chikkamagaluru districts. Infrastructure funds of Rs 2 crore and Rs 7.12 crore were allotted to Udupi and Chikkamagaluru districts, respectively.

All the Naxals who returned to the mainstream are currently in jail. Latha Mundagaru faces 65 cases in Karnataka, including 43 in Chikkamagaluru district. Vanajakshi has 25 cases, Sundari 23, Mareppa Aroli 13, while Jisha and Vasanth have one case each in the district. Most cases are registered at Jayapura and Sringeri police stations, and charge sheets are yet to be filed in many.

Relatives allege that despite assurances to set up a special court and fulfil 18 demands placed by the Naxals, no progress has been made.

Kanyakumari in prison

So far, 21 people have joined the mainstream in the state. Among them, Kanyakumari has been in jail for nine years, with 58 cases registered against her. Her child reportedly spent early childhood in prison. Former Naxals question whether this can truly be called joining the mainstream.

K L Ashok of Shanthigagi Nagarika Vedike said they will meet Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to demand the withdrawal of cases and the establishment of a special court, following the Chhattisgarh model.

BLAZE AT THE BEND

A view of the forest fire seen in Charmadi Ghat near Mudigere in Chikkamagaluru district late on Sunday night.

Issue quota certificates to students on Sevasindhu portal, KEA urges govt

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) has requested the state government to issue certificates that entitle students to claim reservation under various quotas – Kannada-medium and rural quotas, for instance – through the Sevasindhu online portal.

The KEA, which is preparing the ground for the 2026 Karnataka Common Entrance Test (KCET), is of the opinion that issuing certificates through the Sevasindhu portal would benefit both the students and the examinations authority.

In its letter to the Principal Secretary for the Department of School Education and Literacy, the KEA has drawn particular attention to those students who claim reservation under the Kannada-medium and rural quotas. "Issuing these certificates online will enable KEA to access them through the application programming interface, thereby enabling us to verify them digitally," reads the letter.

Pointing to the ordeal that getting these certificates entails, KEA wrote that students had to visit their schools to get the certificate, which must then be countersigned by the concerned Block Education Officer. The KEA further argued that these certificates remain valid forever.

Data sourced from KEA indicates that nearly 1.5 lakh students claim reservation under the Kannada-medium and rural quotas each year. Nearly half of the 3.4 lakh students who appeared for the 2025 KCET examination claimed reservation under either of these two categories. In fact, more than 3.5 lakh of the 6.5 lakh applicants for the village accountant recruitment examinations claimed reservation under one of these two quotas.

KEA said that these certificates could be issued to eligible beneficiaries by creating a permanent Revenue Document number.

KEA officials opined that issuance of certificates through the Sevasindhu portal would render the seat allotment process more transparent. Since submission of additional documents often resulted in delays, issuing certificates digitally would enable KEA to complete the seat allotment process sooner, officials said.

KEA has requested the government to similarly consider adopting the same method for issuing certificates for students entitled to reservation under the 'Linguistic Minority' quota.

15k already applied for 2026 KCET

Meanwhile, the registration process for the 2026 KCET having started on January 17, KEA has already received 15,143 applications, while 18,507 candidates have completed Aadhaar registration. An additional 4,691 candidates have already paid the registration fees.

12-day fast food training

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI), run in collaboration with Sri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara Education Trust and Canara Bank, has invited applications from rural unemployed youth for a 12-day free training programme on fast food preparation, scheduled to begin on February 16, 2026.

Applicants must be aged between 18 and 50 years, be able to read and write Kannada, and must mandatorily possess BPL and Aadhaar cards from rural areas.

For application details and further information, candidates may contact RUDSETI, Arishinakunte, Nelamangala taluk, Bengaluru Rural district, or call 9481506564, 9740982585, 9380162042, 9241482541 and 9113880324, according to a statement.

BY ORDER OF THE HON'BLE Sole Arbitrator Sri Justice A. Venkateshwara Reddy (Rtd.) At Hyderabad Arbitration Case No.07 of 2025 in Arb. Appl. No.240 of 2024 of Telangana High Court

BETWEEN: M/s Srinivasa Resorts Ltd. Reg office at – 6-3-1187, ITC Hotel Kakatiya, Begumpet, Hyderabad-500 016. ... **APPLICANT**

AND: M/s Oryx Marketing, Reg office at – Q-25, Diamond District, Airport Road, Bengaluru – 560 008. Rep by its Partner Javed Rafiqi.

Also at, Shop No. 1, 6-3-1187, Shopping Arcade, ITC Hotel Kakatiya, Begumpet, Hyderabad – 500 016.... **RESPONDENT**

NOTICE

To, **M/s Oryx Marketing,** Reg office at – Q-25, Diamond District, Airport Road, Bengaluru – 560 008. ... **RESPONDENT**

NOTICE

Kindly take notice that the above said Applicant has filed Arbitration Proceedings before the Hon'ble Sole Arbitrator Sri Justice A. Venkateshwara Reddy (Rtd.) at Hyderabad vide Arb. Appl. No. 240 of 2024 wherein you have been arrayed as Respondent. By the Order of the Arbitration Case No.07 of 2025 in Arb. Appl. No.240 of 2024 of Telangana High Court, it is hereby intimated to the Respondent to appear at Flat No. G2, Parimala Winsome, Beside Nitish Castillo Apt, Narsimhapuri Colony, Kothapet, Hyderabad - 500 035 on or before **14/02/2026** or any next date of hearing either in person or through a Counsel. If you fail to appear before the Hon'ble Court, then the matter will be decided accordingly.

RUSHEEK REDDY .K.V, Advocate
III Floor, J K Enclave Rao & Raju Colony, Road No. 2, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad-500034.

South East Central Railway
E-TENDER NOTICE
(Construction Organisation)

TENDER NOTICE NO: CAO/C/BSP /25-26/23 Dated:08-01-2026 (Open Tender) (Two Packet System)

Name of Work: Design, Engineering, Procurement, Construction, Completion, Testing and Commissioning of "Development of Infrastructure Facilities For Maintenance of 300 HHP (9000HP) Electric Loco Motives at Raipur Diesel Shed" in South East Central Railway.

Tender Value : Rs. 812550020.29 **EMD** : Rs. 4062800.00 **Cost of Tender Document :** NIL **Completion period of Work :** 546 (Five Hundred Forty Six) Days, from the date of acceptance letter. **Date & Time of Tender Closing** : Up to 15:00 Hours on 10/04/2026. **Date & Time of Tender Opening** : 15:30 Hrs. on 10/04/2026.

For further details related to tender document eligibility criteria and the complete details for the above work please contract office of the Chief Administrative Officer/Con/ S.E.C.R/ Bilaspur Pin-495004 or Dy. Chief Engineer (Con)/S.E.C. Railway/Bilaspur -Pin-495004 or Dy.Cheif Chief Engineer/Con/ I/S.E.C.Railway/Raipur-492009. Chief Project Manager/West/Construction /South East Central Railway, Nagpur-Pin: 440001 or refer on our website **www.ireps.gov.in**

Dy. Chief Engineer/Con S.E.C.Rly., Bilaspur

CPR/10/AM/619

South East Central Railway @secrail

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL
K KAMARAJ ROAD, BANGALORE-560042
Tele No : 080-25581238, www.apsbangalore.edu.in
LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION – 27 JAN 2026 (1000HRS)

TENDERS ARE INVITED FOR THE WORK/SUPPLY/INSTALLATION AT ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL, K KAMARAJ ROAD, BANGALORE-42

Tender No	Description of Work
APS/351/2025-26	Renovation of barrack No. 3A to make them suitable for Labs & Activity Room
APS/352/2025-26	Renovation of barrack No. 3B to make them suitable for use as 10 Classrooms
APS/353/2025-26	Renovation of Building No. P-38 to make them suitable for storing School Stores
Note	Details of the works are available in school website. Please submit sealed quotation on the envelope mentioning the Tender No and Name of work address to ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL, KAMARAJ ROAD, BANGALORE on or before 27 Jan 2026 by 1000hrs.

ಪಿ ಎಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಯ ವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ ನಂ.1, ಜಾಲಹಳ್ಳಿ ಪಶ್ಚಿಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು – 560015
PM SHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA NO 1 JALAHALLI WEST, BENGALURU 560051

AUCTION NOTICE

Unserviceable articles for condemnation amounting Rs.1,99,166/- pertaining to the following departments of this Vidyalaya will be disposed of through **Public Auction at the Vidyalaya Premises on 24.01.2026 at 11:00AM.**

Sl. No	Name of the Department	SF
1	Furniture Department	61162
2	Chemistry Department	22695
3	Library Department	24516
4	Audio Visual	51599
5	Physics Department	25007
6	Teaching Aid Department	14187
	Grand Total	**1,99,166/-**

The interested bidders may visit this Vidyalaya and take part in the public action on the scheduled date and time. The successful bidders will take away the auctioned articles immediately from the Vidyalaya premises at their own cost after making necessary payment. Payments receipt will be issued by the Vidyalaya office.

Terms and Conditions:

1. Items will be handed over to the highest bidder on the payment of bid amount in full by cash on the spot.
2. The teacher supervising the auction/ Principal of the Vidyalaya will reserve the right to refuse without assigning any reason, the offer of the highest bidder if in their opinion, it is not reasonable.
3. The bidder shall abide by the rules declared at the time of auction.
4. KVS employees & their relatives are not allowed to participate in the auction.
5. Reserve price will be revealed only at the time of auction.

Principal
PM SHRI KV No 1 Jalahalli

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Dy. Chief Operations Manager/O&M, Metro Railway, Kolkata for & on behalf of the President of India invites e-Tenders against Open Tender due to open **on 10.02.2026 at 15:00 hrs.** for the following works. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Name of work:** Design, Supply, Testing, Installation and Commissioning of Automatic Gates (AGs) for AFC-PC System on replacement and addition at Dumdum, Chandni Chowk, Central, Esplanade, Rabindra Sadan, Kalighat, Mahanayak Uttamkumar, Kavi Nazrul & Kavi Subhash stations of Blue Line Metro corridor. **Tender Value:** ₹ 25,72,77,481/- **Earnest Money:** ₹ 14,36,400/-; **Cost of Tender Document:** ₹ 0.00; **Completion Period:** 08 months. The tender can be viewed at website **https://www.ireps.gov.in.** The tenderer/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidders can participate on e-Tendering. All relevant paper must be uploaded at the time of participating in e-Tender.
Open Tender Notice No.: OPERATING-AFC-PC-AG-NS-2026 Date: 19.01.2026

Follow us at: /metrorailwaykol /metrorailkolkata

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
GeM Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical), Southern Railway, Madurai- 625016 for and behalf of The President of India invites Online tenders in Two packet system from reputed contractors for the following works as per tender notice given in Government e-Marketing place (GeM) portal. The tenderer(s)/Contractor(s) to apply for works in Madurai Division, need to be enrolled in the GeM portal and only online tenders will be accepted.

1.	**Name of the work**	Outcome based comprehensive cleaning contract at Kovilpatti, Virudhunagar, Tenkasi, Sengottai and Rajapalayam Railway stations and Railway colonies for a period of 1095 days
2.	**GeM Bid No.**	**GEM/2026/B/7113156 Dt: 14.01.2026**
3.	**Place of work**	Kovilpatti, Virudhunagar, Tenkasi, Sengottai and Rajapalayam – MDU Division
4.	**Value of the work**	**Rs. 6,96,49,703** (Including GST & Other taxes)
5.	**Tender closing date**	04.02.2026 20:00 hrs

Break up for each schedule values are as follows.

Sl. No.	Schedule	Total Value for 1095 Days In Rs.
1	Maintenance of cleanliness at Kovilpatti railway station and colony for a period of 1095 days	1,43,97,717
2	Removal and disposal of rubbish from Kovilpatti railway station and colony premises to corporation dumping yard or authorized recyclers by motor vehicle	10,31,800
3	Maintenance of cleanliness at Virudhunagar railway station and colony for a period of 1095 days	1,95,61,686
4	Removal and disposal of rubbish from Virudhunagar railway station and colony premises to corporation dumping yard or authorized recyclers by motor vehicle	17,18,200
5	Maintenance of cleanliness at Tenkasi railway station and colony for a period of 1095 days	98,13,747
6	Removal and disposal of rubbish from Tenkasi railway station and colony premises to corporation dumping yard or authorized recyclers by motor vehicle	3,45,400
7	Maintenance of cleanliness at Sengottai railway station and colony for a period of 1095 days	1,13,45,927
8	Removal and disposal of rubbish from Sengottai railway station and colony premises to corporation dumping yard or authorized recyclers by motor vehicle	13,77,200
9	Maintenance of cleanliness at Rajapalayam railway station and colony for a period of 1095 days	97,14,826
10	Removal and disposal of rubbish from Rajapalayam railway station and colony premises to corporation dumping yard or authorized recyclers by motor vehicle	3,43,200
	Total cost in Rs	**6,96,49,703**

Further details are available in the detailed tender notice on website **www. Gem.gov.in**

DME/EnHM & Frt./MDU

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is hereby informed that our client intends to take on lease the immoveable property which is morefully described in the Schedule below ("**Schedule Property**") from Mr.Prabhakar C S/o. B.Chinnaswamy ("**Owner**"). The Owner has represented that he is the owner of the Schedule Property, having unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Public is notified that any person having any claim or interest, or any person claiming to have any manner of right, title, interest, claim, benefit, demand or interest in or in relation to the Schedule Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, let, lease, license, assignment mortgage, inheritance, bequest, succession, gift, lien, charge, maintenance, bequest, easement, trust, possession, family arrangement, settlement, decree or order of any court of law, contracts/agreements, development right, partnership or arrangements of whatsoever nature, may lodge his/her/their objections and/or claims in writing, along with documentary evidence in support thereof, to the undersigned within 7 (Seven) days from the date of this notice. If no such claim is received, it would be deemed that no person, except the Owner, have any right over the Schedule Property and claim/s if any, will be deemed to have been waived.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Immovable Property bearing No.249/324, New BBMP E-PID No.2347915150 [Portion of new survey no.324/1], situated at Begur Village, Begur-3 Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore -560 068, measuring **East to West**: On the Eastern side-29.56 meters; On the Western side -31.39 meters; **North to South**: On the Northern side -26.26 meters; On the Southern side -17.58 meters, totally measuring 668.21 sq.mtrs/7192.sq.ft/6.60 Guntas and bounded by: **East** :Private Property; **West**: Property of Shrthachander **North**: Road/adjoining Property and **South**: Property of Sharmila Changappa.

Date: 20/01/2026

Sd./

Umashree N
Advocate
No.3/1, 1st A Cross, Park Road,
1st Stage Indiranagar, Bangalore -560 038
Ph: 9663078174

AUCTION NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of vehicles.

1) CB_TIPPER_SIGNA_4830_ TATA_MOTORS YOM – - Reg No – KA01AP8773
2) CB_AMBULANCE YOM – 2022 Reg No – KA11C2300
3) CB_TIPPER_SIGNA_4830 _TATA_MOTORS YOM – - Reg No – KA01AP8772
4) CB_Ashok Leyland Dost GOODS YOM – 2024 Reg No – KA38A6548
5) CB_MARUTI SUPER CARRY YOM – 2022 Reg No – KA16AA3190
6) CB_ TATA INTRA V30_ COMMERCIAL VEHICLE YOM – 2024 Reg No – KA38A6715
7) CB_Escorts JCB 3DX Excavator Loader YOM – - Reg No – KA06MB2021
8) CB_Ashok Leyland Dost GOODS YOM – 2022 Reg No – KA11C3242
9) CB_50_KVA_GENSET_AL_ 50KVA_ASHOK_LEYLAND YOM – 2024 Engine No RMHM108623
10) AL_DOST_GOODS YOM – 2023 Reg No – KA17AA8452

UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE/OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION i.e. from 20.01.2026

(Please note that closing Auction date would not be a Weekly off / Holiday)

BRANCH ADDRESS:
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD., 22, MG ROAD, BANGALORE KARNATAKA – 560001
OR
Contact: Arunlaxman Kokare Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. Contact / 080 - 61564249

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Dept. of E, IT & Bt
Local Economy Accelerator Program
₹1,000 Crore over 5 years
Aims: 10,000 startup
5 lakh employment opportunities
16 sub-programs
Driving Entrepreneurship in Karnataka's emerging clusters
Know More: eitbt.karnataka.gov.in

1.6 lakh BC,..

Scholarship, from Page 1

For 2023–24, as many as 8.04 lakh students had applied for scholarship. After scrutiny, 7.4 lakh were declared eligible.

While 7.08 lakh students received amount, 31,413 students were left out.

The number of applicants increased in 2024–25, to 8.13 lakh. Of these, 6.51 lakh students were declared eligible, but only 5.23 lakh received scholarship amount. As many as 1.28 lakh students are awaiting disbursal.

"I applied when I joined, I am now in my third year and have not received it even once," said Chitra from Dharwad.

Recently, students of College of Agriculture in Dharwad staged a protest for scholarships. Sanat Totiger, president of Students' Association, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, told *DH* that scholarships had not been released for past 2 years.

Totiger said earlier, OBC and minority students received Rs 38,000 as scholarship, covering nearly 50% of college fees. Adding to students' woes, Totiger said, the government reduced amount to Rs 15,000 from 2024, even as college and hostel fees increased to nearly Rs 1.25 lakh.

Another student, Mahadev, said he visited BCW department more than 10 times, but to no avail.

Acknowledging the delay, Backward Classes Welfare Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi said the department would soon disburse pending scholarships.

BCW commissioner Dayanand K A stated the finance department had given approval for the proposal seeking funds for disbursement of scholarships a couple of days ago and the process to clear dues is underway.

Cong leaders upbeat over ballots; BJP, others say it's 'regressive'

If there's an issue with ballots again, what next?: BNP founder

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The state election commission's decision to reintroduce the ballot paper system for the Bengaluru civic elections after a gap of 25 years has reopened an old debate on transparency versus efficiency in local body polls.

Former councillors remain divided, with some viewing the move as a corrective to trust deficits in electronic voting, while critics warn of logistical challenges and potential for delays and disputes.

Former mayor G Padmavathi of the Congress advocated the use of ballot paper for more transparency compared to electronic voting machines (EVMs).

"We are often told that EMVs can be hacked, so personally I prefer ballot paper. It is simpler and more efficient. We welcome the government's move".

The former councillors opine that confusion exists in the mind of citizens about which system is better than the other.

Former mayor Gangambike Mallikarjun, also of the Congress, said: "This election may clear the confusion among both citizens and public representatives about the systems. With political leaders raising questions about the authenticity of EVMs creating more confusion, a local election with ballot papers may be a good move".

Former corporator Abdul Wajid said: "Our party (Congress) introduced EVMs, but the opposition party (BJP) has hacked them. They are tampering with the machines and there is lack of transparency. Even the US is using ballot papers".

"Results in a ballot system might come late, but it is a trusted system. Hopefully, by this step we are sending out a message to the entire country that we want fair elections," he said.

Padamanabha Reddy, a former BJP corporator, said, "This is all being done in to please Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. If they are claiming EVM fraud by BJP, how did they win 136 seats in 2023? The BJP should have won and formed the government. They are just fooling the people".

Srikanth Narasimhan, founder and general secretary of Bengaluru Navanirmana Party (BNP), called the move to reintroduce ballot papers "regressive".

"How is the government making sure that there will not be any flaws with the ballot paper system. How is it saying fair elections cannot be conducted with EVMs? There were defects in the ballot system and we switched to EVMs. Now, if there is an issue with ballots again, what next? This move is probably because of the vote chori campaign".

Panchayat elections in May-June: State poll panel

BENGALURU, DHNS: Panchayat elections in Karnataka will be held in May or June, the State Election Commission announced on Monday, adding that the calendar of events for the much-delayed polls will be finalised once the state government completes the delimitation of boundaries and reservation matrix.

Briefing reporters, State Election Commissioner G S Sangreshi said the preparation of electoral rolls for the panchayat elections would not take much time as the commission would be using the same rolls used for assembly polls.

"Elections are due in close to 6,000 panchayats across the state. Both taluk and zilla panchayats have had no elections in the last five years. Now, we are prepared to hold the elections to all panchayats at once in May or June," he said.

The commission can meet the timeline provided the government completes delimitation and reservation matrix.

Sangreshi said the government had assured the High Court of Karnataka on completing both these exercises by January 30. "The government had sought extra time twice to complete delimitation as panchayat areas were merged into the jurisdiction of municipal corporations. We are hopeful of conducting the elections in May or June," he said.

Other than the panchayat elections, which are known as rural local bodies, elections are also due for 192 urban local bodies (ULBs). Sangreshi promised that the commission would hold elections to these corporations in the same period. "The election will be held soon after SSLC and PUC exams," he said.

FAIR FINALE

Fireworks light up the sky amid teppotsava and Kapilarathi organised as part of Shivarathreeshwara Shivayogi fair in River Kapila at Suttur in Nanjangud taluk of Mysuru district on Monday. DH PHOTO/ANUP RAGH T

India & UAE...

India & UAE, from Page 1

They acknowledged steady and strong bilateral defence and security cooperation as a core pillar of the comprehensive strategic partnership. A 10-year LNG Supply Agreement between Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) of India and ADNOC Gas of UAE for delivery of half a million tonnes per year of liquefied natural gas, beginning 2028, was also signed on Monday.

Besides, the leaders welcomed enactment of the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) law, noting that it creates new opportunities for civil nuclear cooperation.

The two sides agreed to explore partnership in advanced nuclear technologies, including development and deployment of large nuclear reactors and Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), as well as cooperation in advanced reactor systems, nuclear power plant operations and maintenance and nuclear safety.

Modi and the UAE president welcomed the momentum generated by recent exchange of visits by respective service chiefs and commanders of army, navy and air force of both countries, as well as the successful bilateral military exercises.

The Letter of Intent for conclusion of a Strategic Defence Partnership agreement was signed on the occasion.

Riyadh had, on Sept 17 last, entered into a defence pact with Islamabad, not only disregarding personal rapport between Modi and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, but also overlooking New Delhi's security concerns.

The Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement had committed Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to help each other while responding to aggression by a third country against either of them. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are purportedly trying to rope in Türkiye to turn the bilateral deal into a trilateral one.

Relations between Saudi Arabia and the UAE, once close allies, recently came under stress over diverging regional ambitions, particularly in Yemen.

The strategic defence partnership between New Delhi and Abu Dhabi, however, is unlikely to commit each other to stand in defence of either of them in case of aggression by a third country.

The agreement will expand defence cooperation across a number of areas, like defence industrial collaboration, defence innovation and advanced technology, training, education and doctrine, special operations and interoperability, cyber space and counterterrorism.

Jewellery stores rise on silver...

Silver, from Page 1

According to Srinivas R, secretary of the Jewellers' Association Bengaluru, only silver stores dealing in jewellery have seen an increase.

The proprietor of a recently opened silver store in Jayanagar said they are focusing on selling silver coins.

"With gold almost touching Rs 15,000 per gram, people are turning to silver despite its booming prices," the proprietor said. "We decided to expand our business and open a second store in South Bengaluru in October last year, because there is clearly a demand. Customers want to buy silver and sell it when it reaches its highest price."

To keep up with the changing trends, many stores are changing their marketing strategies.

Laabh Jewels in Wilson Garden is focusing more on everyday jewellery pieces falling within Rs 5,000 budget.

"For a business that's focused on silver jewellery, the market's not good right now. A jewellery set which would've cost around Rs 1,500 is now priced at Rs 10,000 or more. So we are mainly focusing on smaller everyday pieces that can fall within a budget. Since it's pure silver, people don't hesitate to spend Rs 5,000," said Harsh Jain, owner.

But the demand for silver pujaware has dropped.

"There has not been an increase in the number of silver article stores," he said. "The craftsmanship in silver jewellery has tremendously improved over the years; any design which can be made in gold can also be recreated in silver. So people who can no longer afford gold jewellery are opting for silver pieces. Hence, jewellery stores have doubled."

Barton's on MG Road, known for its silver gifting and puja items, has seen a drastic drop in customers over the past six months.

Bullish future

The market is expected to remain bullish in 2026, predicts C Vinod Hayagriv, Managing Director, C Krishniah Chetty Group of Jewellers.

"The volatile nature of the market and the imbalance are expected to persist this year. We don't know when there's going to be a correction," he said.

Hareesh V, Head of Commodity Research, Geojit Investments Limited, shared the sentiment.

"The metal has been in a deep supply deficit for five consecutive years, with global inventories shrinking as industrial, manufacturing and investment demand outpace output. This imbalance is expected to persist into 2026, reinforcing bullish momentum," he said.

No decision on party symbols in GP polls: Shivakumar

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government has not decided on demands that gram panchayat elections should be fought on party symbols, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said on Monday.

D K Shivakumar

Unlike taluk and zilla panchayat elections, political party symbols are not used by candidates contesting gram panchayat polls. "Some say that these elections should happen on symbols. We haven't decided on that," Shivakumar, who is also the Karnataka Congress president, said.

The government wants to complete the long-pending taluk and zilla panchayat elections this year, Shivakumar said. They have been pending since 2021. Also, the term of gram panchayats will end this month and February. "We want to hold all polls together," he said.

Shivakumar also defended the use of ballot papers instead of electronic voting machines (EVM) for the Bengaluru civic polls by the State Election Commission. "There's nothing wrong. Ballot is stronger than a bullet," he said.

Time will answer everything: Shivakumar on becoming CM

'All 140 MLAs, including the CM, are supporting me'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Keeping his chief ministerial hopes intact, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Monday hoped that "time will answer everything" and maintained that the Congress top brass would take a call on the leadership dispute.

"Time will answer everything. That's all I want to say," Shivakumar said after returning from New Delhi.

It was widely believed that Shivakumar, while in Delhi, tried to seek clarity on when he would replace Siddaramaiah as the chief minister.

Shivakumar noted that his brother, former Bangalore Rural MP D K Suresh and Congress workers were wishing that he become the chief minister. "All 140 MLAs, including the CM, are supporting me," he said.

"Do you know what the chief minister and I have discussed in front of Rahul Gandhi and the high command? We know what we've decided. I can't discuss that in the media," Shivakumar said.

Shivakumar blamed the media for "unnecessary" confusion. "There's no buzz on the leadership issue. The CM and I have communicated to the party leadership. The party will take a call," he said.

Shivakumar also denied claims that he could not meet Rahul. "The AICC itself released a photo showing me in a meeting with Rahul and other leaders," he said.

During the day, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge did not respond to questions on the leadership tussle between Siddaramaiah and Shivakumar.

Meanwhile, IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge said the Congress top brass would "intervene" at the right time.

"There's no point in us discussing this. Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge will intervene when required," Priyank, the Congress president's son, said.

Visit to Davos

After facing criticism for cancelling his scheduled trip to Davos for the World Economic Forum, citing "official" engagements, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Monday said he has been asked to attend the event.

"Delhi has permitted me. Even the CM has asked me to go there. Friends in the Opposition have also advised me," Shivakumar said on his going to Davos.

A Karnataka government delegation, led by Industries Minister M B Patil, has already left for Davos. The Opposition BJP and JD(S) criticised Shivakumar for cancelling his trip to Davos.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast Jan 20: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	30.6	12	00
Bidar	31	13.5	00
Vijayapura	30.8	13.6	00
Dharwad	30.4	13.5	00
Haveri	30.2	14.6	00
Kalaburagi	33.4	16	00
Raichur	32	13.8	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	32.4	17.2	00
Karwar	35.6	19.2	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	33.2	20.8	00

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	NA
Bengaluru	29.7	15.4	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	30.5	14.4	00
Davangere	31	11	00
Hassan	30.6	10.8	00
Mysuru	29.6	11	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	29.6	9.6	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	NA	7.7	00
Kolkata	26.5	13.4	00
Mumbai	27.5	15.9	00
Chennai	31.1	19.5	00
Pune	30.9	12.7	00
Hyderabad	32	16.4	00
Th'puram	33.1	23.3	00

After 25 yrs, B'luru to vote...

Ballot, from Page 1

Elections to zilla and taluk panchayas have also been on hold for the last five years.

In Karnataka, gram panchayat elections are held using ballot papers as one voter is allowed to cast vote for multiple candidates unlike in municipal elections.

When reporters quizzed about the possible delay in the counting of votes because of ballot papers, Sangreshi said the commission would make adequate logistical arrangements to ensure counting was over on the same day.

"We are well-equipped to conduct elections using ballot papers. There will be no hurdles. All counting centres will have CCTV cameras. Adequate police arrangements will be made," he said in defence.

The use of ballot papers, he said, will also provide an opportunity for young voters to experience the change as EVMs have been around for the last 20-30 years. "Let us see how the feedback is," he noted, dismissing the question whether the Congress-led state government pressured the commission to use ballot papers.

Notably, national and state-level leaders of the Congress, which rules the state, have questioned the reliability of EVMs on several occasions.

In loving memory of
Perminder Singh Malik
April 30th 1946 - January 19th 2026
We mourn the passing of Perminder Singh Malik, a kind and gentle person.
He lived with dignity and was loved by all who knew him.
We pray that Waheguru grants eternal peace to his soul and gives strength to the family.
He will be deeply missed and remembered.
Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh.
Last Respects 11am - 2pm
Pebble Bay Tower 4
Apartment 13
Cremation 20th January at 3pm
Chira Shanti Dham - Hebbal
Ingrid Malik
Avinash Malik
Rohan Malik and Pooja shah

DGP Ramachandra Rao in soup after 'sleaze' video

CM vows disciplinary action; IPS officer claims footage 'fabricated'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Just a day after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah expressed strong displeasure over tainted police officials, a video purportedly showing Director General of Police (DGP) K Ramachandra Rao in a compromising position with several women inside his office went viral on Monday.

The footage allegedly shows Rao hugging and kissing the women while in uniform during office hours.

The women allegedly visited the office on different occasions and appeared in different outfits. The footage purportedly captures Rao interacting closely with them while official work was underway. An audio of Rao's purported "romantic" telephonic conversation with a woman was also shared widely.

Rao (59), a 1993-batch IPS officer, is the DGP of the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement and is to retire on superannuation in July.

Responding to the controversy, the chief minister told reporters at Nandgad village in Belagavi district that the videos had come to his notice and promised disciplinary action after a thorough inquiry. "Whoever has done wrong should face action, he said.

In his defence, Rao said the video was fabricated.

Speaking to reporters, he claimed that the footage was eight years old and recorded at his office in Belagavi during an earlier posting. He stressed that the video was manipulated and that he was not aware if anyone had attempted to extort money from him by threatening to release it.

He said he would also seek legal action against those circulating the video after consulting his lawyers.

Rao is no stranger to controversies. On March 3, 2025, his stepdaughter and Kannada actress Ranya Rao (32) was arrested by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) for smuggling 14.2 kg of gold from Dubai. She remains in jail.

Following her arrest, the government placed Rao under suspension, which was revoked in August 2025.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru-based advocate Owaiz Hussain has petitioned the chief minister, the Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court, and the Director General and Inspector General of Police, seeking immediate action. In his complaint, Hussain clarified that he was neither asserting the authenticity of the video nor making any direct allegation against the officer concerned, but sought an inquiry as the footage had entered the public domain.

BJP alleges graft, diversion of central funds under MGNREGA

'Rs 8 lakh to Rs 10 lakh has been misused per panchayat'

BENGALURU, DHNS

The BJP on Monday alleged large-scale corruption and diversion of funds under MGNREGA and the 15th Finance Commission's tied grants meant for gram panchayats (GPs), accusing the Congress government of turning the rural employment scheme into a "source of revenue".

State party general secretary P Rajeev told a press meet that massive corruption had taken place in Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) department.

"RDPR Minister Priyank Kharge is ignoring constitutional violations within his own department while frequently invoking the Constitution in public discourse. The Finance Commission grants to local bodies are of two kinds — tied (restricted) and untied (unrestricted). Tied grants are mandatorily released by the Centre to 6,000 GPs in Karnataka. Under the federal system, even a single rupee cannot be diverted from prescribed purpose. But thousands of crores of rupees were misappropriated through commission-based allocations favouring GPs represented by Congress legislators," he said.

In Hanagal taluk of Haveri district, Rajeev said funds meant for multiple GPs were arbitrarily diverted to just 24 GPs.

Noting that BJP had drawn the Centre's attention to the matter, Rajeev warned Karnataka could be denied future grants if misuse was proven.

The BJP leader claimed that despite representations from the federation of GP presidents and members in this regard, the department commissioner issued no written response.

"Priyank Kharge has no moral authority to continue as minister. An amount of Rs 8 lakh to Rs 10 lakh has been misused per panchayat. But suspending officials for a few months and reinstating them does not help ensure accountability," said Rajeev.

Referring to a Lokayukta complaint from Raibag taluk in Belagavi district, he said fraud of Rs 10 crore to Rs 12 crore had taken place in a single GP, where bills were raised for 52 works that were never executed.

He said Rs 5.36 lakh was drawn for a waste-processing shed that was never built, and officials claimed the amount was spent on buying office ledgers.

Congress leaders were protesting against VB G RAM G, because it left no scope for scams, the BJP leader said.

"The party was indifferent to terror attacks like in Pulwama and Pahalgam, but is agitated when corruption avenues are threatened. VB G RAM G will effectively cut off their income source. Karnataka has received Rs 5.5 lakh crore under MGNREGA so far. I dare the Congress to give one example where funds were utilised in a transparent way," he said.

Schoolchildren were dressed in sarees and shown as workers. Men wearing masks posed as labourers to raise fake bills, Rajeev said, questioning why only a PDO had been suspended despite documentary evidence of fraud.

Change in SSLC 2nd preparatory examination timings

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a bid to prevent question papers from being leaked, the Department of School Education has revised the timings for the second preparatory examination for SSLC students.

The exams, scheduled between January 27 and February 2, will begin at 11am instead of 10am, as was the case for the first preparatory examination. While regular classes will be conducted from 9am to 10.30am, students must be seated in the examination halls by 10.50am.

The department has also issued a set of instructions for printing and distribution of the papers.

The question paper is to be downloaded at the school only at 9.30am on the day of the exam, and printing is to be completed by 10am. The papers must be kept ready for distribution by 10.30am, and dispatched to the exam halls by 10.50am.

Urging schools and local authorities to remain vigilant, the department has warned heads of schools, nodal teachers, Block Education Officers, and the concerned Deputy Directors of legal action should the question paper be leaked.

An exhibit of a strategy session by freedom fighter Sangolli Rayanna is displayed at the 'Veerabhumi' museum at Nandgad in Khanapur taluk of Belagavi district. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated the museum on Monday. DH PHOTO/EKANATH AGASIMANI

Congress won't politicise voter list revision: CM

BELAGAVI, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Monday that Congress will not politicise the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls by Election Commission of India (ECI).

Speaking to reporters at Nandgad village in Khanapur taluk, Siddaramaiah said that the party was concerned about genuine voters and they should not be left out of voter rolls.

Reacting to allegations by MLA Janardhana Reddy that chief minister and his cabinet colleagues were looting the state, he said, Reddy looted wealth of the state and was in jail. "The case is pending before the Supreme Court. Therefore, he has no moral right to make allegations against us," the CM said.

He said state's legal team was ready to make its stand in the Supreme Court as the suit filed by Maharashtra regarding the Karnataka-Maharashtra boundary dispute will come up for hearing on January 21. "We will question whether the issue of deciding states' borders comes under the purview of the apex court."

Speaking after inaugurating Sangolli Rayanna Museum (Veerabhumi) at Nandgad, Siddaramaiah said that the government will also develop memorials of six other freedom fighters were executed along with freedom fighter Sangolli Rayanna. He said Nandgad will be developed as a place of tourist attraction.

Chalukya Utsava

Siddaramaiah also inaugurated Chalukya Utsava at Badami in Bagalkot district.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that Rs 2,000 crore had been released for developing Badami.

"I was defeated at Chamundeshwari Assembly constituency. But the people of Badami elected me because of which I am chief minister today. I won't forget you people," Siddaramaiah said.

Ballari violence: Reddy questions govt reluctance on CBI probe

BENGALURU, DHNS

Former minister and Gangavathi BJP MLA G Janardhana Reddy on Monday demanded to know why Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was "reluctant" to hand over the Ballari violence case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), and had instead handed it over to the CID.

Speaking to reporters, Reddy alleged that Siddaramaiah was deliberately diverting the issue and also recalled his earlier stint as the CM when he had handed over seven cases to the CBI. "Why is there hesitation now in the Ballari case?" Reddy said, also accusing the Congress government of attempting to shield its MLA Nara Bharath Reddy despite him facing serious allegations, including murder and attempted murder.

Sriramulu's padayatra

Reddy expressed confidence that the BJP leadership would give its green signal to senior leader and former minister B Sriramulu to undertake a foot march (padayatra) from Ballari to Bengaluru.

"The padayatra is to focus on injustice and violence committed in the name of the Valmiki community, including the Valmiki Corporation scam in which an innocent person lost his life in Shivamogga. Now, the Valmiki banner is being misused to indulge in violence and political vendetta in Ballari. Sriramulu, as a prominent leader of the Valmiki community, wants to question how many more innocent lives will be lost in the name of Valmiki," Reddy said.

Sriramulu booked for revealing rape survivor's identity

An FIR has been registered at Ballari women's police station against former minister and BJP leader B Sriramulu under POCSO Act Juvenile Justice Act for allegedly revealing the name of a minor rape survivor during his speech in a party rally on January 17, reports DHNS from Ballari

The FIR was registered on Sunday based on a complaint lodged by the inspector of the APMC police station.

According to the complaint, the BJP leader revealed the identity while addressing the BJP protest rally in the city on Saturday.

Targeting the Congress government and the City MLA Bharath Reddy over the deteriorating law and order in the state, Sriramulu had said: "Bharath Reddy has turned youth and students into drug addicts. Four to five students, under the influence of drugs, raped a student of a school in the city."

He went on to reveal the name of the survivor, her school, class and the caste.

The following day, based on the complaint by the inspector of the APMC police station, the personnel of the women's police station booked Sriramulu under Sec 23(1) (2) of the POCSO Act and Section 74 of the Juvenile Justice Act.

Govt takes indent for shoe-socks for 26-27 to avoid delay

BENGALURU, DHNS: To avoid delay in distribution of shoe-socks for government schoolchildren, the Department of School Education and Literacy has started taking indent from schools for the 2026-27 academic year.

The department has issued an official circular regarding this and directed the deputy directors of public instructions (DDPI) to submit data of students studying between classes 1 and 10.

Meanwhile, the department has also asked the DDPIs to submit separate data on districts which prefer slippers in place of shoes-socks.

As there is always a provision for schools to choose between shoes and slippers considering the climate and geographical conditions of the place where the school is located, the department has reiterated the same in the circular issued for 2026-27 too.

"As procurement of shoe-socks is done at local level, data is being collected to release funds. It is left to the school development and monitoring committees and school heads to decide on shoes or slippers," said a department official.

Measles-Rubella vaccination begins for infants and toddlers

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has begun administering the Measles-Rubella vaccine to infants aged 9-11 months (first dose) and toddlers aged 16-24 months (second dose) under the Universal Immunisation Programme.

The programme, which will run until January 31, is backed by the Government of India, which has committed to eliminating measles and rubella by the end of 2026.

In view of the likelihood of widespread transmission of measles from October to December and the possibility of a higher number of cases being reported from January to March, a Measles–Rubella fortnightly vaccination campaign will be organised at Urban Primary Health Centres and outreach areas of the five city corporations under the GBA jurisdiction, officials said.

Parents of children aged up to five years who have, for any reason, experienced a delay in vaccination or whose children have not been vaccinated need to visit the nearest PHC and ensure that their children receive the required vaccines.

This campaign covers 1,040 high-risk areas, including slums and areas reporting measles cases, under which 1,493 children will be administered the MR-1 vaccine and 1,512 children will be administered the MR-2 dose vaccine.

DH Classifieds

BUSINESS

Business Offers

Finance

MSME LOAN
Available For Any Start-UpsCompanies And Existing Running Companies,Hotels,Shops Establishments Etc
Contact-7204995189

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Hospital & Medical Jobs

WANTED PHARMACIST D-Pharma / B-Pharma
Contact:Chaitanya Hospital No 80/117 P&T Colony, R.T.Nagar Bangalore-32
Call:9900520357

CAUTION NOTICE
Readers are advised to make appropriate thorough enquiries before acting upon any advertisement. This newspaper does not vouch or subscribe to the claims and representations made by advertisers.
Advertisement Manager The Printers (Mysore) Pvt. Ltd. Bengaluru

PERSONAL

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Mohan Kumar S/o Sunder Raj, residing at 63/3, Pillanna Layout, SRK Nagar Post, Thanisandra Main Road, Ashwath Nagar, Bangalore-560077, have changed my name to S MOHAN KUMAR vide affidavit dated 16-01-2026 before notary B Seshagiri, Bangalore. Henceforth I shall be called S MOHAN KUMAR only

I, MOHANAKUMARA G.G residing at TUMAKURU-572130 have changed my name as MOHAN KUMAR G.G, vide affidavit dated 17/01/2026 before Notary K.S. Bammappanavar, Bengaluru

Lost

LOST
I, N H Janakamma, residing at No.143(35), 9th Main Road, 4th Block, Nandini Layout, Bangalore – 560096, have lost Sale Deed No.1606/1992-93 Dt:20-11-1992 of Site No.12, Sy No. 30/1 of Arisinakunte village, Seenappa Layout. Anybody found inform me Mob:9980450475 or nearby police station.

Bescom to add 1,051 MW of solar power under KUSUM C by March

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) aims to add 1,051 MW of solar power by March 2026, as it has expedited the works underway on 157 projects under the KUSUM C scheme.

According to a senior Bescom official, 32 projects with a combined capacity of about 200 MW have already been completed. By January 2026, 500 MW, and by March, 1,051 MW of solar power capacity will be completed.

Bescoms believes the projects will empower farmers with solar power and reduce their dependence on the power utility.

"These projects will provide solar power that will be supplied to agricultural pumpsets. So their dependency on traditional power supply reduces," a senior Bescom official said.

While agricultural pumpsets receive nearly seven hours of power daily, farmers are unhappy, according to a Bescom source.

"Reliable power supply is still a dream for many farmers. Many want power supply for longer hours or during a particular time. Solar-powered pumpsets will address many of these issues," the source said.

Tenders have been invited for the generation of 2,520 MW of solar power across Karnataka.

The state aims to generate 3,900 MW of solar power under the KUSUM C programme. As many as 397 electricity substations in the state are being solarised.

"This is expected to help at least 6.7 lakh farmers. Apart from this, other farmers are also being encouraged to solarise their pumpsets under KUSUM B, where the subsidy under the state is increased to 50%. Now, farmers have to only pay 20% of the cost as the other 30% is paid by the central government," a senior Bescom official said.

7 booked for aggressive gesture at dargah in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, DHNS: A Maharashtra-based woman leader of a Hindu outfit was booked for making an aggressive gesture at a dargah in Peeranwadi on the outskirts of Belagavi city on Sunday evening.

The woman reportedly stood atop a vehicle and posed as if she were aiming an arrow at the local dargah on Belagavi-Khanapur road. Six others, who had organised a Hindu convention during which the incident occurred, have also been booked by the Belagavi Rural police.

Maharashtra-based Hindu outfit leader Harshita Thakur who was standing atop a vehicle made the gesture.

A video of her gesture went viral on social media igniting unrest in the area.

Local cops, who rushed to the spot, were however able to defuse the tension and bring the situation under control.

Acting on the complaint, Belagavi Rural police registered a case against Harshita Thakur and others.

After death of 4 spotted deer, treating rest uphill task for Davangere zoo

DAVANGERE, DHNS

Following the death of four spotted deer due to suspected haemorrhagic septicemia at Indira Priyadarshini mini zoo at Aangodu near here in the last four days, treating the herd of remaining 166 deer which may have been infected has turned out to be an uphill task for the forest department.

A team of six members led by wildlife veterinarian Prayag H S is providing treatment to all deer in the zoo.

The treatment is expected to continue for one more week. The dearth of animal keepers (presently only two are serving) and the absence of adequate enclosures are turning out to be impediments for the existing staff.

Deputy conservator of forests Harshavardhan P N told *DH*, "Haemorrhagic septicemia (HS) is an airborne disease. It is contagious and deadly. So, we are taking all possible measures to ensure that the remaining deer are not infected. Generally, it spreads from infected livestock to other animals. There is a national highway in front of the zoo and a reserve forest behind it. Hence, there is no possibility of the movement of domestic cattle in and around the zoo. So, there is a need to investigate the source of disease outbreak".

He said, "the situation is under control and the samples of blood and some organs of the deceased deer have been sent to Institute of Animal Health and Veterinary Biologicals in Bengaluru for testing. We expect to receive the report in two to three days."

"As the number of spotted deer and blackbucks is over 100, identifying symptomatic deer is practically impossible," Harshavardhan said.

"Above all, deer are highly sensitive animals and we can't capture them and provide treatment," he added.

As many as 31 blackbucks died due to a fatal outbreak of haemorrhagic septicaemia at Kittur Rani Chennamma mini zoo in Belagavi recently.

Spotted deer at the Indira Priyadarshini mini zoo at Aangodu near Davangere. DH PHOTO/SATISH BADIGER

Treatment mode

The zoo staff are mixing medicine with the food given to the deer once in the day. Dry grass is fed to them in the evening.

Corrigendum

In an article titled *'Cabinet reshuffle buzz exposes Muslim leadership tussle'*, Government Chief Whip Saleem Ahmed was wrongly identified as a member of the Beary community.

He belongs to the Urdu-speaking Sunni sect. An alum of Seshadripuram College in Bengaluru, Ahmed went on to become the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) president in the 1990s.

He also contested the Lok Sabha polls twice from Haveri. In 2021, Ahmed was elected as MLC representing the Kittur Karnataka region. The error is regretted.

At over Rs 3,335 crore, BJP's election spend dwarfs Congress

During 2024-25, saffron party reported an income of Rs 6,769 crore

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The BJP spent Rs 3,335.36 crore on elections in 2024-25, which is 3.75 times more than the Rs 896.22 crore spent by the Congress, according to an analysis of the saffron party's audit report.

During 2024-25, when elections to the Lok Sabha, eight state assemblies and several bypolls were held, the BJP reported an income of Rs 6,769.14 crore, including donations worth Rs 6,124.85 crore. Its total expenditure stood at Rs 3,774.58 crore, leaving a surplus of Rs 2,994.56 crore.

In comparison, the Congress' income was Rs 918.28 crore in 2024-25, while its expenditure was Rs 1,111.94 crore.

The BJP's income rose to Rs 4,340.47 crore in 2023-24, while its expenditure stood at Rs 2,211.69 crore, according to the audit report submitted to the Election Commission.

Advertisements

Of the Rs 3,335.36 crore the party spent on elections, Rs 897.42 crore went towards advertisements, Rs 583.08 crore was spent on helicopters and choppers for leaders, and Rs 312.90 crore was provided as financial assistance to its candidates.

BJP Audit (2024-25)

Total Income: Rs 6,769.14 cr

Donations: **Rs 6,124.85 cr**

Total expenditure: Rs 3,774.58 cr

Election expenditure: **Rs 3,335.36 cr**

Surplus: Rs 2,994.56 cr

The BJP also spent Rs 74.34 crore on its employees, including Rs 69.07 crore on salaries and Rs 5.27 crore on staff welfare schemes. The party's salary bill has come down from Rs 69.11 crore in 2023-24.

While it sold used newspapers for Rs 2.26 lakh during 2024-25, the party bought newspapers worth Rs 50.29 lakh in the same period.

According to its audit report, reported by *DH* in December, the Trinamool Congress' donations fell from Rs 646.39 crore to Rs 184.08 crore. Its total expenditure stood at Rs 227.59 crore, of which election spending accounted for Rs 137.58 crore.

The YSR Congress reported a decline in donations to Rs 140.05 crore from Rs 184.11 crore, while its election expenditure was Rs 299.92 crore, including Rs 2.14 crore spent on star campaigners. The TDP's donations dropped to Rs 85.20 crore from Rs 274.65 crore, and the BJD's report showed a decline to Rs 60 crore from Rs 245.5 crore.

The CPI(ML)L saw its donations rise from Rs 94.63 lakh to Rs 2.98 crore, with writer Arundhati Roy, who gave Rs 1 lakh, among the donors. It spent Rs 1.69 crore on elections during 2024-25.

The BJD spent Rs 270.66 crore for elections in 2024-25, including Rs 6.02 crore for pre-poll surveys and Rs 2.25 crore for post-poll surveys. The JD(U)'s donations rose to Rs 18.69 crore from Rs 4.35 crore, while the Samajwadi Party saw its donations increase from Rs 48.22 lakh to Rs 93.47 lakh.

SC flags airfare fluctuations, calls it 'exploitation'

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Supreme Court on Monday said it would interfere with the "unpredictable fluctuations" in airfares and flagged the exorbitant rise during festivals.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta termed the exorbitant rise of airfares by airlines as "exploitation" and asked the Centre and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to file their replies to a PIL seeking binding regulatory guidelines to control the unpredictable fluctuations in airfare and ancillary charges imposed by private airlines in India.

"We will definitely interfere. Just see the exploitation of passengers done during the 'Kumbh' and other festivals. Just look at the fares to Prayagraj and Jodhpur from Delhi," the bench told Additional Solicitor General Anil Kaushik appearing for the Centre.

Justice Mehta, in a lighter vein, told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who was in the courtroom, that maybe airfares for Ahmedabad may not have increased but they have shot up for other destinations like Jodhpur.

The top court listed the matter for further hearing on February 23 after Kaushik sought time to file a reply on behalf of the Centre.

On November 17, last year, the top court sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea by social activist S Laxminarayanan, who has sought to establish a robust and independent regulator that ensures transparency and passenger protection across the civil aviation sector.

It has issued notices to the Centre, the DGCA and the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India seeking their responses on the plea.

Col Qureshi case: SC asks MP to decide on action against minister

NEW DELHI, DHNS: In a setback to Madhya Pradesh minister Kunwar Vijay Shah, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the state government to decide within two weeks whether to grant sanction for prosecution in the FIR lodged against him over his objectionable remarks targeting Colonel Sofiya Qureshi.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Dipankar Datta and Joymalya Bagchi said the Special Investigation Team constituted by the apex court had completed its probe and submitted its final report, which was awaiting sanction from the Madhya Pradesh government.

The court noted that a sanction from the state government was required for a court to take cognisance of the offence under Section 196 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which deals with the promotion of communal hatred or ill will.

It also observed that the SIT had referred to certain other instances in which Shah allegedly made objectionable remarks against the senior Indian Army officer.

Colonel Qureshi was one of the prominent female military officers who addressed the media during joint press briefings for the armed forces' 'Operation Sindoor', launched to avenge the Pahalgam terror attack last year.

Sonowal files FIR over 'fake' letter

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Monday said he has filed an FIR over a letter that claimed he wanted a change in the leadership of the BJP's Assam unit.

Dismissing the letter as fake, Sonowal said there was "no truth whatsoever in the allegations of internal rivalry".

The letter, purportedly addressed to the BJP national president, had surfaced amid rumours of an internal conflict within the Assam BJP.

Nitin Nabin elected BJP president

5-time Bihar MLA to succeed Nadda; youngest chief at 45

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Nitin Nabin is set to succeed JP Nadda as the next president of the BJP after being elected unopposed to the top post on Monday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to make the formal announcement on Tuesday at the party headquarters.

Nabin's was the only nomination in the presidential election. In all, 37 sets of nomination papers were filed in support of the five-time Bihar MLA, with proposers including PM Modi, Nadda and others.

At 45, Nabin is the youngest president in the party's history, and his appointment signals a generational shift in the BJP. He was named the working president in December, paving the way for his elevation to the top post.

Presiding officer K Laxman said that all nomination papers were found valid. "On scrutiny, all sets of nomination papers were duly filled in the required format and were valid. After the period of withdrawal, in my capacity as National Returning Officer, I hereby announce that only one name, that of Nitin Nabin, has been proposed for the post of National President of the BJP," Laxman said in a statement.

"The process is now complete; we are left with just the declaration and the announcement, which will be made in the presence of the prime minister on Tuesday," Laxman told *DH*.

The election process was only a day-long affair. On Friday, the notification of the schedule of events was issued and the electoral roll was published, listing over 5,700 voters. As per the schedule, the nomination process was completed on Monday between 2 pm and 4 pm

Laxman said the process of the presidential election was initiated after the election of 30 state presidents out of 36 states, which he noted is "well above the required number". The party's constitution states that organisational polls must be held in at least 50% of the states for the presidential election to take place.

Among the states where organisational polls did not take place, Karnataka is the only major one, in addition to smaller states such as Punjab, Tripura, Manipur and Delhi.

WHO'S NABIN?

- Nitin Nabin is a five-time legislator from Bihar
- He has held several portfolios, including Road Construction, Urban Development & Housing and Law & Justice
- His father Nabin Kishore Prasad Sinha was a longtime party leader and MLA
- Nabin contested his first election from Patna West constituency in 2006
- After delimitation, he shifted to Bankipur seat
- He won from Bankipur in 2010, 2015, 2020, and again in last year's Assembly polls

CBI grills Vijay for 6 hrs on TN stampede

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) president and actor Vijay on Monday appeared before the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for the second time in connection with the stampede at a rally in Karur on September 27 that killed 41 people and stuck to his stand that the state government's "negligence" was responsible for incident.

Vijay was grilled for about six hours on Monday at the CBI headquarters in New Delhi by a team of officials led by a deputy superintendent rank officer, drawn from the agency's anti-corruption unit, which is investigating the Karur incident. This was the second round of questioning by the CBI after the actor was grilled for about seven hours on January 12.

"Our leader (Vijay) was issued witness summons and he appeared before the CBI today. The questioning is over and they have not asked him to appear again," C T R Nirmal Kumar, TVK joint general secretary, told reporters in New Delhi. He also dismissed news reports that Vijay might be arrested and that his name will figure in the chargesheet.

TVK chief and actor Vijay leaves CBI headquarters in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

While leaving the CBI office, Vijay came out of his vehicle and waved at fans who gathered at the venue. However, he did not respond to reporters' request for a reaction to the questioning.

Sources told *DH* that the CBI questioned Vijay on the answers he gave during the first round of questioning and sought more clarity on why he arrived at the venue 7 hours late and why he continued with his campaign despite noticing people fainting. They said the CBI wanted to know what time Vijay completed his speech and how he left the venue.

Vijay is learnt to have responded that he left the venue only with assistance from the local police, who ensured his safe return to Tiruchirapalli from Karur. "He insisted that neither he nor his party were responsible for the incident. He laid all the blame on the district administration," the source said.

The questioning came at a time when the BJP is facing questions about whether it was trying to stop the release of Vijay's cinema swansong, 'Jana Nayagan', through the Central Board of Film Certification. BJP leaders have been inviting Vijay to join the NDA in Tamil Nadu to ensure that the anti-government votes don't get split, eventually helping the DMK.

Techie death: UP govt sacks top Noida official; SIT formed

LUCKNOW, DHNS: Taking a serious note of the death of a software engineer after his car plunged into a water-filled ditch in Sector 150 on Saturday, the Uttar Pradesh government on Monday removed the Greater Noida CEO Lokesh M and formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the incident.

According to the official sources here, the SIT will submit its report to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath within five days.

According to sources, the Chief Minister ordered strict action against anyone identified as negligent in the issue at any level.

Additional Director General of police, Meerut zone, would lead the SIT, sources said. The other members of the SIT included the commissioner of Meerut division and the chief engineer of the PWD.

The SIT would also probe the cause of the incident, the role of the concerned departments, fix accountability of the officials and suggest steps to prevent recurrence.

Don't fuel terrorism in our neighbourhood: Jaishankar to Poland

NEW DELHI, PTI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Poland's Deputy Prime Minister Radoslaw Sikorski, during a meeting in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

Poland should display "zero tolerance" for terrorism and not help "fuel" the terrorist infrastructure in India's neighbourhood, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told his Polish counterpart Radosław Sikorski on Monday in a blunt message apparently over the mentioning of Kashmir in a Poland-Pakistan joint statement in October.

At a meeting with Sikorski, Jaishankar also expressed his anguish over the unfair and unjustified "selective targeting" of India over the Ukraine conflict, in what is seen as a reference to Western nations' criticism of New Delhi over its energy ties with Russia.

The external affairs minister made the comments in his televised opening remarks at the meeting in New Delhi. Sikorski is also Poland's deputy prime minister.

On his part, the Polish foreign minister said he completely agreed with Jaishankar on the "unfairness" and "selective targeting" in the context of tariffs over India's relations with Russia.

Sikorski is on a three-day visit to India that came less than 10 days before the top leadership of the European Union travels to the country.

"You are no stranger to our region and are certainly familiar with the longstanding challenge of cross-border terrorism," Jaishankar said.

"I hope at this meeting to discuss some of your recent travels to the region. Poland should display zero-tolerance for terrorism and not help fuel the terrorist infrastructure in our neighbourhood," he said.

In late October, Sikorski travelled to Islamabad and held wide-ranging talks with Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, following which a joint statement was issued that featured the Kashmir issue.

Jaishankar also mentioned India's consistent position on the Ukraine conflict. "In the recent past, both in New York last September and in Paris this January, I have candidly shared with you our views on the Ukraine conflict and its implications," he said.

"While doing so, I have also repeatedly underlined that the selective targeting of India is both unfair and unjustified. I do so again today," he added.

In the talks, the two leaders discussed ways to take forward ongoing cooperation in trade and investment, defence and security, clean technologies and digital innovation.

HC quashes I-T notices to Roys; fines tax dept Rs 2 lakh

NEW DELHI, PTI: Terming the reassessment proceedings "arbitrary" and against fundamental and constitutional rights, the Delhi High Court on Monday quashed the 2016 income tax notices to NDTV founders Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy and asked the department to pay Rs 1 lakh to each of them as a token cost.

Prannoy Roy

A bench of Justices Dinesh Mehta and Vinod Kumar observed that authorities subjecting Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy to reassessment proceedings for second time for same transaction and "practically for same issue" was without jurisdiction.

The court further said initiation of proceedings leads to unnecessary harassment on one hand and gives rise to unpredictability and uncertainty, if not anarchy, on the other.

"The facts of the present case speak volumes as to how the proceedings are arbitrary and contrary to the statutory provisions, besides being against the fundamental principles of adjudicatory process," the bench said, allowing the pleas of the Roys.

"Impugned notice(s) dated 31.03.2016 issued to the petitioner(s), so also any consequential order(s) or proceedings pursuant thereto are quashed. No amount of cost can be treated enough for these cases, however, we cannot leave these cases without imposing any. Hence, we impose a token cost of Rs 1,00,000/- per case upon the respondents to be paid to each of the petitioners," court ordered.

The income tax notice pertained to the reassessment of the petitioners' income for the year 2009-10 on account of certain "interest-free" loans received by them from RRPR Holding Private Limited.

TALES OF A CITY

Karnataka doc was 1st BJP mayor of Mumbai

MRITYUNJAY BOSE
MUMBAI, DHNS

With the BJP emerging as the single largest party in the toughly-contested elections to the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation, it is all set to have its mayor in Mumbai.

However, this would not be the BJP's first mayor in the civic body. From 1982 to 1983, Dr Prabhakar Pai was the saffron party's mayor of Bombay, as the metropolis was then called. He hailed from Barkur in Karnataka's Udupi district.

"This was just a couple of years after the formation of the BJP," recalled veteran journalist, political analyst and commentator Prakash Akolkar.

Pai had an illustrious career — municipal councillor (1968-1984), mayor of Mumbai (1982-83), chairman of the BEST Committee (1978), chairman of the Medical Relief & Public Health Committee, Mumbai (1968-1970), executive vice-president pf the Life Insurance Federation Of India, general secretary of the Mayor's Fund Committee, trustee of the Zunka Bhakar Trust of Mumbai, and vice-president of the Ramakrishna Mission.

"Pai came from a Congress background, but switched to the Janata Party and then back to the Congress," said veteran political commentator Sanjeev Sabde.

The doctor and social worker also founded the Janata Seva Sangh.

Meanwhile, the Urban Development Department has scheduled the lottery draws for January 22. The lottery decides the category for which the mayor's post will be reserved, such as SC, ST, OBC, women and general.

PM Modi receives UAE President in rare airport gesture

NEW DELHI, DHNS & PTI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday received United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in a rare gesture.

"Went to the airport to welcome my brother, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE. His visit illustrates the importance he attaches to a strong India-UAE friendship," Modi posted on X.

Both then rode in the same vehicle to 7, Lok Kalyan Marg — the official residence of the prime minister.

"We discussed a wide range of issues aimed at further strengthening the multifaceted India-UAE friendship," Modi posted.

The UAE president was in New Delhi on a brief tour.

The prime minister also noted that the presence of Al Nahyan's family members, marking the UAE's Year of Family, lent significance to the visit. "It reflects the enduring bonds of trust and people-to-people ties between India and the UAE."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during a meeting at the PM's residence in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

Modi gifted an ornate wooden swing from his home state of Gujarat and a pashmina shawl to the UAE president, officials said. Modi also gifted a pashmina shawl in a silver box to Al Nahyan's mother Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak Al Ketbi.

Assam's Kaziranga reports 3 tiger deaths in a fortnight

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) in Assam has witnessed the death of three Royal Bengal tigers in a fortnight, with officials suggesting infighting as the cause.

With 148 tigers, the 1,307-sq-km Kaziranga has the third-highest density of the felines, after Bandipur in Karnataka and Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand.

The third death was reported on Sunday when forest officials found the carcass of a female tiger in the Kathpora area under the park's Western Range Bagori.

"A committee was constituted by the KNPTR director to carry out a post-mortem examination and disposal of the carcass as per the Standard Operating Procedure of the National Tiger Conservation Authority. Preliminary findings during the post-mortem exam suggest that infighting led to the tiger's death," said Divisional Forest Officer Arun Vignesh.

Two such deaths took place on January 4 and 14.

Asked about any specific push factor towards the three fatal infighting since January 4, KNPTR Director Sonali Ghosh told *DH*: "No reason; it's part of the natural process of selection."

Firoz Ahmed, an expert on tiger conservation, however, said that although infighting was natural, infighting in Kaziranga might be influenced by tigers' inability to move out of the park and settle outside the core area, as well as Kaziranga's tiger population.

"Infighting is natural, and mostly happens when territories overlap or resources are scarce. As far as resources are concerned, that is not the cause here, due to the high diversity and population of tigers' prey. The cause may be the tigers don't find space outside the core areas," said Ahmed, who heads the tiger research and conservation division of the Guwahati-based biodiversity conservation group Aaranyak.

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

IndiGo's lapses called for deterrent penalty

The penalty of Rs 22.2 crore imposed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on InterGlobe Aviation, the operator of IndiGo, for the large-scale flight disruptions in December, is inadequate and way less than proportionate. The cancellations and delays caused not just inconvenience, but trauma and large-scale financial losses to lakhs of passengers. It was reported that over 2,500 flights were cancelled and about 1,800 were delayed. These disruptions affected personal and professional schedules and caused huge losses by way of missed appointments or opportunities, and spending on alternative flights and arrangements. They caused not just a loss of image to the airline, but affected the reputation of the country's aviation sector – Rs 22 crore is too small a price for that.

The action was initiated based on the findings of an inquiry ordered by the government and conducted by a committee appointed by the DGCA. Over-optimisation of operations, deficiencies in planning software and management protocols, and inadequate regulatory preparedness were the major causes of the disruption, the committee reported. It has been noted that the airline failed to maintain operational buffers and did not implement the revised Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) norms. These are serious lapses resulting from a policy the airline had consciously pursued. This approach may also have been a result of the airline's dominance in the sector and the influence it wields. Such deliberate flouting of norms and casual attitude to passengers' convenience deserved a higher penalty than a rap on the knuckles.

A grossly inadequate fine ignores the impact of disruptions and reflects regulatory weakness

IndiGo's top leadership, including the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Pieter Elbers, has only been issued notes of caution for inadequate oversight and crisis management. The DGCA did not consider any of them deserving of substantial penal actions. Only one senior official was removed from his position. The penalty amount is a pittance, considering that the airline earned a profit of Rs 7,253 crore in 2024-25. Penalties in such cases are, as a norm, framed to hurt the erring entity, especially when the lapses are the result of a deliberate policy. They are also finalised by considering the impact of the lapses. The penalties imposed by the DGCA cannot be considered to have any deterrent effect. The airline's thinking that it could get away with its actions has only been validated with this lenient response. The committee's report mentioned "inadequate regulatory preparedness" as a reason for the crisis. The DGCA is responsible for it, and it is not known if anyone has been held accountable for this failure.

Fare policy must place commuters at its centre

The prospect of another Namma Metro fare hike – this time, a 5% automatic increase in February – has led to widespread public consternation. Although the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has not formally announced the hike, the outrage is understandable. Fares were sharply increased last year after a long gap, with some routes seeing increases of up to 71%. Another hike in 12 months was bound to provoke resistance. In principle, an annual, modest adjustment is not unreasonable. Such small, predictable revisions are far preferable to infrequent but steep shocks. The 2025 hike made the Namma Metro one of the country's most expensive systems, and even a 5% increase now feels punitive, especially to daily-wage earners and lower-middle-class commuters.

What should have been a technical discussion on fare policy has instead become a political football. BJP MP Tejasvi Surya has called the proposed hike unscientific and anti-people. He has questioned the Fare Fixation Committee's calculations, alleging arithmetic errors, an outdated base year for costs, and exaggerated increases in maintenance expenses. He has also highlighted that a ten-kilometre ride in Bengaluru costs far more than in cities such as Delhi or Chennai, arguing that high fares undermine the very purpose of mass transit by pushing commuters back to private vehicles. The ruling Congress has responded by shifting the focus squarely to the legal structure. It argues that under the Metro Railways (Operation and Maintenance) Act, 2002, fare fixation lies with a statutory committee appointed by the Centre and that its recommendations are binding. As BMRCL is a joint venture with a Union government-appointed chairperson, the state insists it has no authority to roll back fares. BMRCL, on its part, argues that periodic fare revisions are necessary to meet rising electricity and maintenance costs, staff salaries, debt-servicing obligations, and to reduce operational losses.

Proposed Metro fare hike conflicts with core public transport principles of access and equity

Lost in this blame game is the commuter. Public transport cannot be allowed to become a luxury. Globally, metro systems survive not on fares alone but on sustained government support and innovation. European cities heavily subsidise travel: London cross-subsidises through congestion charges on private vehicles; Singapore separates capital costs from operations; Hong Kong keeps fares in check by developing and monetising real estate around stations. For Namma Metro, the path forward lies in balance: predictable and transparent fare policy, aggressive non-fare revenue through property development and advertising, operational efficiency, and public funding that recognises mass transit as a social good. Growth and financial sustainability are important, but access and equity must remain at the core of Bengaluru's Metro story.

WAR WITHOUT CLOSURE

Sri Lanka's shame: State and sexual violence

Rape and torture of Tamil women continued after the civil war. A UN report highlights fear and mistrust of justice systems

M R NARAYAN SWAMY

Can you imagine a woman getting chopped into pieces? Someone cutting off men's genitals and thrusting them into women's mouths? What will you call men who insert rods into dead women's bodies? All of this happened when the Sri Lankan authorities gave a free hand to security forces to crush the Tamil Tigers. But even after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was militarily routed in 2009, sexual violence against vulnerable Tamil women in Sri Lanka's northeast has not stopped.

These are the sickening findings in a United Nations report that details sexual violence against combatants and civilians from 1985 (two years after a Tamil separatist campaign began) to 2024, when a centre-Left coalition led by the Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP or People's Liberation Front) rose to power in Sri Lanka.

The report by the United Nations Human Rights Office in Geneva was released on January 13. That it does not name any of the traumatised survivors should not surprise anyone. The document exposes the lengths to which security forces went to dehumanise an entire society just because the LTTE, which claimed to speak for the Tamils, rose in armed opposition against Colombo. These acts, some of which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, were used as a strategic tool to extract information, assert dominance, intimidate individuals and communities, and instil a pervasive climate of fear and humiliation.

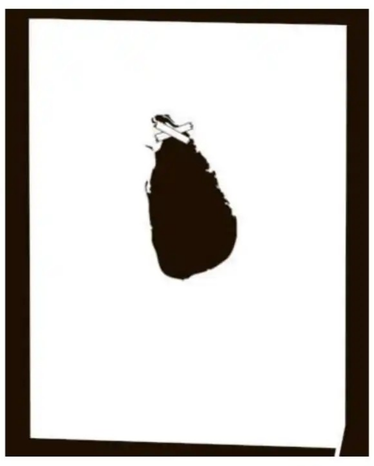
According to the report, the incidents were part of a deliberate, widespread and systemic pattern of violence. All of it was institutionally enabled, indicating they were sanctioned by the highest in the government.

Successive Sri Lankan governments have denied much of this, dubbing them unfounded allegations. Even amid credible reports of the deaths of thousands of innocent Tamils in the final stages of the war, Colombo maintained an air of innocence and, instead, accused the LTTE of killing civilians who tried to escape from its jurisdictional custody.

Sri Lankan authorities have failed to adequately investigate or prosecute cases of sexual violence or punish the perpetrators. Many of the Tamils who spoke in confidence to the UN recounted various forms of harm and victimisation, including rape, gang rape, sexual torture, pregnancies resulting from rape, repeated assaults, forced nudity, as well as sexual extortion and sexual exploitation.

The alleged perpetrators included members of the army, navy, air force, the Criminal Investigation Department, the Terrorism Investigation Division, the Special Task Force, as well as anti-LTTE Tamil groups such as the Eelam People's Democratic Party and the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal.

The victims were targeted due to



their Tamil ethnicity or alleged past ties to the LTTE. From the 1980s, hundreds of women fought for the LTTE as it became a feared insurgent group, controlling a third of Sri Lanka's land area and two-thirds of its sea coast. While many joined the Tigers willingly, many underage girls of later years were forcibly recruited.

A complicit system facilitated the crimes

A reading of the report shows that when security forces cracked down on the insurgents, they made little distinction between the fighters, real or perceived sympathisers, and innocent women who had nothing to do with the conflict. Survivors told the UN that the security forces aimed to terrorise the Tamil community to the point of dehumanising them. If this were not the case, the troops would not have committed the degrading acts despite being largely from the Buddhist faith.

A survivor said military personnel cut off the genitals of men and put them in women's mouths. One woman was chopped into pieces. A former LTTE cadre saw soldiers inserting sharp blades and rods into the bodies of female guerrillas who were dead and whose naked bodies were hanging from the trees. The report noted: "The recurrence of identical methods, environments, and perpetrators across time and locations strongly suggests a coordinated institutional policy aimed at asserting control through widespread and systematic violence."

It added that the post-conflict State's failure to ensure accountability for wartime abuses mirrors its continued failure to protect vulnerable groups from sexual violence in peacetime, exposing a continuum of impunity and gendered harms. The report says sexual violence was also employed when the leftist JVP unleashed urban insurrections in 1970-71 and 1988-89. Both periods saw thousands of killings, mainly of suspected Sinhalese members of the JVP, whose surviving leaders now govern Sri Lanka.

But it was during the civil war from 1983 to 2009 that sexual violence came to be used widely against civilians and actual or suspected LTTE members. Detention centres were sites of systematic torture. Both men and women recounted extreme physical abuse during interrogation, including rape, gang rape and general torture. Sex was coerced in exchange for access to visit a relative or to be granted an early release. The absence of access to justice, acknowledgement, and reparations for wartime crimes has created a legacy of impunity that continues to shape the lived realities of survivors.

The report documented a rising trend in rape and incest complaints, from 1,397 cases in 2007 – two years before the war ended – to 2,175 in 2013. Even off-duty members of the army were involved in sexual violence.

The national response to the tragedy was hampered by under-reporting, lack of trust in State institutions, and the absence of comprehensive data collection.

Also, many survivors refrained from reporting their experiences due to a fear of retaliation, deep-rooted social stigma, and lack of trust in justice mechanisms. There were also multiple barriers within the justice system. Complaints were often trivialised or ignored. Some women complained that the same police officers recording the complaint solicited sexual favours.

The report has made a string of suggestions, including intervention by the international community, through all legal means, including extraterritorial jurisdiction, to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of sexual violence due to the prolonged lack of accountability in Sri Lanka.

(The writer is a long-time observer of Sri Lanka and the author of four books on the ethnic conflict)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Power lunch, by two

The taste of the *masala dosa* has stayed on long after the speeches faded

SRIDHAR SACHIDANANDA

I have been fortunate to have had a tryst with one of the tallest leaders of the BJP, Lal Krishna Advani , when I accompanied him on the Swarna Jayanti Yatra in 1997. I was then a rookie, working for a struggling newspaper. I had no experience in political reporting or in reporting of any kind. Yet I had an opportunity to spend time with a stalwart—Advani.

I accompanied him on the Karnataka leg of the *yatra*, from Dakshina Kannada to Belagavi, for six days. The *rath* itself was a sight to behold. It resembled the chariot from an epic. The cavalcade stretched to over two dozen four-wheelers and was followed by streams of two-wheelers in every city we passed through.

My instructions from my bosses were clear: Don't send speeches, send colour stories. This meant that Advani*ji*'s diatribe against issues like Article 370 was of no use to my paper. What they wanted were stories about the *yatra*—people rushing to catch a glimpse of the man of the moment, villagers travelling long distances to attend rallies, and the mood on the road.

I did this for two days and then ran out of ideas. I complained to my 'handler' at the newspaper—a university senior and a friend—that I could not write colour stories anymore. He urged me to keep at it. So, I did. And then something wonderful happened.

Advani*ji* took specific notice of me. It is well known that he reads every local newspaper he can get his hands on while on tour. Encouraged, I pressed on and wrote more stories — on the Black Cat commandos providing security, on a centenarian making his way to the rally venue and so on. These were the kinds of stories journalists call 'sidelights', meant to accompany the main political report.

After this, Advani*ji* invited me into the *rath*, where he spent most of his time during the *yatra*. I was told he wanted to meet me alone. When I stepped inside the moving *rath*, I saw a BJP *karyakarta* serving him lunch—a *masala dosa* with *sambar* and *chutney*. He welcomed me warmly and asked me to sit opposite him. That was the only seating available.

Then something unexpected happened. He took a spoon, cut the *masala dosa* into two, kept half for himself and offered me the other. I was hungry and accepted it. Instead of talking politics, he asked me about myself — why I wanted to be a journalist, my college days, my family, etc. Not a single word about politics was exchanged.

After this assignment, covering Lal Krishna Advani's rallies became my regular beat. I met him again in Shivamogga months later. He did not recognise me then, but that was expected. I was just one among hundreds of reporters he had met over a lifetime. But for me, the time spent with him remains an experience I will never forget.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Global leaders should call out the humanitarian crisis in Iran

The reports emerging from Iran, detailing a staggering death toll of over 3,000 protesters, are a chilling reminder of the cost of demanding basic liberties under an authoritarian government. While the world's attention is often diverted by shifting geopolitical alliances and economic data, we cannot remain indifferent to the systematic suppression of a population through mass arrests and prolonged internet blackouts. The use of "digital darkness" to mask State-sanctioned violence is a growing global trend that threatens the very fabric of international human rights. When a state can cut off its citizens from the world to hide its actions, the international community's response must be more than just diplomatic "concern". It is imperative that India, as a leading democratic voice in the world, takes a principled stand. The spirit of dialogue often championed at international summits must extend to people on the streets, not just to leaders in high office.
Jeremy Daniel R, Bengaluru

Hope on horizon

Apropos 'Tech hiring set to rise this year with 1.25 lakh new roles' (Jan 19), this is a welcome relief for India's youth. It brings renewed optimism to undergraduates, MBA and MTech graduates who have been struggling with shrinking campus placements and limited hiring. Rising recruitment indicates improving industry confidence and growing demand for skills in digital technologies. For young job seekers, this development restores hope, encourages skill building and reinforces faith in education, while also supporting broader economic recovery and job growth.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

Goa 2.0 in Karnataka

The Karnataka government's vision to develop the state's coastal tourism on the lines of Goa is a welcome step but needs careful consideration. While coastal tourism can help Karnataka's economy, ecological conservation must take precedence over development. Any development work must involve and benefit the local communities without disrupting their life and livelihoods.
Deeptha Prasand, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

Do you know what the CM and I have discussed in front of Rahul Gandhi and the high command? We know what we've decided. I can't discuss that in the media. Time will answer everything. That's all I want to say.

D K Shivakumar, Karnataka Dy CM

This suspense is terrible. I hope it will last.
Oscar Wilde

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

Bridging governance and scholarship

The Institute for Social and Economic Change has helped shape Karnataka's distinctive expert-led policy model

R S DESHPANDE

Karnataka is notable among Indian states for its tradition of involving experts in shaping development policies, particularly in Bengaluru, which hosts institutions such as the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC). Established in 1972 by Prof V K R V Rao, who believed that scholarship could influence policy more effectively than ministerial roles, ISEC exemplifies this approach. Prof Rao, a towering figure in Indian social science and instrumental in establishing institutions such as the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi School of Economics, and the National Council for Applied Economic Research, was elected Minister of Education after a major victory in Bellary. He soon resigned from Indira Gandhi's Cabinet, however, to pursue his larger vision of building a research centre in Karnataka. He designed ISEC as an autonomous, multidisciplinary institute bringing together economics, sociology, political science, and environmental studies. Over time, ISEC has demonstrated that social science research can be both rigorous and policy-relevant, forging a vital link between scholarship and governance in the pursuit of equity and sustainable development.

After founding ISEC, Prof Rao led a Ford Foundation-funded study on development planning for Tumakuru district. This included a detailed survey to identify priorities, shape district-level planning, and introduce a cluster approach to rural development. In the 1970s, the Bangalore City Survey, based on extensive fieldwork, provided comprehensive data on Bengaluru. The Centre for Research in Urban Affairs now focuses on urban policy feedback related to urban development issues. ISEC also conducted an orientation programme on decentralisation following the 1984 law enacted by the Government of Karnataka. A national seminar involving experts from across the country was held, and its proceedings were shared with the state government, contributing to the strengthening of decentralised development. An induction course for district officers involved several senior IAS officers. Another landmark was the 1983 National Seminar on Centre-State Relations, which helped shape the idea of the Inter-State Council, eventually established in 1990 to enhance coordination between the Union and the states.

Beyond policy

ISEC faculty have significantly influenced agricultural policy, from the Green Revolution and irrigation development in Karnataka to the formulation of sericulture policies and the 1993 Satish Chandran Committee report. Their work informed Karnataka's first comprehensive agricultural policy in 1995 and a second draft in 2006, as well as studies on farmer suicides. Over 20 years, this influence extended to issues such as WTO-related policies, agricultural pricing, climate change, and district planning, shaping both state and national strategies.

ISEC's role in conducting the National Family Health Survey and its wider work in demography have been widely recognised, particularly for contributions to understanding employment trends, population projections, and public health challenges. The institute regularly hosts public lectures on current issues, including the Rajyotsava Lecture, the V K R V Rao Memorial Lecture, the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture on Ethics, the Rajbhavan Lecture, and the L S Venkataraman Lecture, along with numerous seminars and workshops.

ISEC currently has nine centres focusing on diverse areas of social science research, including agricultural and rural transformation; economic policy and planning; decentralised development; social change; population studies; urban development; human development and education; and political institutions. In addition to funding from the Government of Karnataka, the Government of India, and the Reserve Bank of India, the institute undertakes sponsored projects for national and international agencies.

Since its inception, ISEC has developed a vision document articulating its goals for the next decade and a research perspective for its faculty. These documents are reviewed every 10 years, and the institute's research broadly aligns with their directives, while faculty members are encouraged to pursue independent research and publish accordingly. The PhD programme at ISEC is among the most prestigious in the country, and its alumni hold many significant positions in India and abroad. In the coming decade, ISEC aims to secure degree-awarding status for its doctoral programme. Having completed 50 years as an active participant in state policy-making, ISEC is widely recognised for its contributions. Owing to the commitment of those who have shaped it over the years, the institute has established itself as one of India's leading centres for social science research. With continued support from the Government of Karnataka, ISEC should aspire to become an institute of excellence in the social sciences for the state, fully autonomous in its functioning. Karnataka has adopted a unique collaborative model involving policy experts in planning and implementation, which has helped it maintain leadership in development despite various natural challenges.

(The writer is a former director of ISEC)

Walking the fiscal tightrope: The many balancing acts before the Budget

V VENKATESWARA RAO

The preparation of the Union Budget 2026–2027 will be a formidable challenge for Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, given the global tariff wars, heightened geopolitical tensions and a potential revenue shortfall in FY26. The Budget must sustain growth, rein in the fiscal deficit to 4.2-4.4% of GDP in FY27, maintain higher capital expenditure outlays, and deliver a strong supply-side push to revive private investment.

Simultaneously, it must provide for a higher defence budget to modernise the armed forces in an increasingly high-tech and volatile geopolitical environment; support merchandise exports amid an adverse global trade climate; continue PLI-type programmes to raise manufacturing's share of GDP; attract foreign direct investments through tax reforms and deregulation; and strengthen social sector support for the four priority groups—*gareeb* (poor), *yuva* (youth), *annadata* (farmers) and *naari* (women)—termed GYAN segments. Balancing these often competing priorities will be a tightrope walk few would envy.

Former Finance and Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg has warned that the Centre faces severe headwinds on the tax revenue front. He estimates a shortfall of nearly Rs 3 trillion in gross tax collections in FY26 (the official estimates are much smaller at Rs 48,000 crore), driven by income tax relief on incomes up to Rs 12 lakh and large GST rate cuts following the prime minister's 'double Diwali GST bonanza' announcement in his Independence Day speech. These cuts, however, have not meaningfully boosted consumption to offset revenue losses.

The scope for raising additional taxes is limited. Any increase in import duties risks retaliatory tariffs from other countries. Personal income tax and GST rates have recently been pruned, capital market taxes were raised in the 2025-2026 Budget, and higher corporate tax rates would invite strong resistance from industry.

The Finance Minister may be able to increase the Centre's capital expenditure by a modest 6-7% year-on-year. Higher capital expenditure outlays are expected in the Union Budget for infrastructure projects in sectors like railways, highways, urban infrastructure and transfers to states — together accounting for nearly 80% of the Centre's capex— are expected to continue. However, the budget should enhance capex allocation for agri-infrastructure such as cold storage, irrigation projects, and greenfield fertiliser plants, while moderating the capex allocation for transport infrastructure. Capital expenditure in the defence sector focussed on modernisation and expansion of the indigenous manufacturing capacity deserves special attention. Increased allocations for clean water supply, underground drainage, and flood control are equally critical to ensuring dignified living conditions in both urban and rural India.

Strategic sectors such as semiconductors, electronics, renewable energy and artificial intelligence are also likely to feature prominently. The recent rollout of the India Semiconductor Mission 2.0, with an enhanced financial outlay of Rs 1.8 trillion, points to the priority accorded by the government for the emerging and strategic sectors. The budget may prioritise chip design and capital equipment for domestic manufacturing. Semiconductor manufacturing relies on a specialised ecosystem of capital goods and tools, from advanced lithography systems to precise etching tools.

Raising manufacturing's share of GDP remains an urgent imperative. Budgetary support for research and development can help Indian firms move up the value chain. Expanding PLI schemes, offering long-term tax incentives for greenfield investments, improving access to credit, and creating sector-specific industrial ecosystems will aid this effort. Deregulation, reduction in compliance burden and decriminalisation of minor lapses will empower entrepreneurship and start-ups. While the government has announced the new labour codes, land reforms remain a critical unresolved challenge.

The World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI) is an interactive benchmarking tool created to help countries track their performance in trade logistics and identify challenges and opportunities to improve their performance. The LPI is based on two components: First, a worldwide survey of international logistics operators on the ground (global freight forwarders and express carriers), providing feedback on the logistics "friendliness" of the countries with which they trade. The second component of the LPI is based on granular high-frequency information on maritime shipping and container tracking. Though India has improved its ranking in LPI 2023 by jumping six places to rank 38 among 139 countries, further investments and improvements in these areas are needed to enhance supply-side investments and international trade.

Finally, to contain the fiscal deficit within 4.2-4.4% of GDP while expanding capex and to reduce the Centre's debt-to-GDP ratio to 50% by FY31 from the current 56.1% of GDP, revenue expenditure must be reduced. This requires rationalising non-military manpower costs, pensions, interest payments, non-essential publicity and ceremonial spending. "Minimum government, maximum governance" must move from slogan to practice.

(The writer is a retired corporate professional)

Beyond ideological swings, bureaucrats anchor India's democratic consensus

K N HARI KUMAR

Part 2

To comprehend the innate strength of our democratic norms, practices, and institutions, we need to examine the origins of democracy in the forging of the Indian nation – its identity, its unity, its agenda – in the crucible of the struggle for Independence against British imperial rule. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the nationalists had argued that British rule was responsible for the poverty of India, the drain of wealth from India to Britain, the deindustrialisation of India to favour British industry, and overall economic backwardness. They debated, represented, and agitated for participation in governance through democratic representative institutions, initially within the framework of British rule. From the 1920s onwards, the movement acquired mass support and a radical agenda of complete independence. As national unity was seen as essential for the success of the struggle, from the start, the movement sought to include all social groups – castes, classes, religions, tribes, etc. With the achievement of Independence, the nationalist leaders, their ideology, practices, and agenda rose to hegemony in society; they became the mainstream, the common sense of society. They had tremendous popular support and legitimacy. They realised their liberal social-democratic vision in the Constitution, its institutions and procedures, and the policies and actions of the governments they led. Their ideology formed the basis of public opinion and civil society.

FILE PHOTO/AFP

Narendra Modi's spectacular victory in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections was based on the adoption of that vision of inclusive development as the main platform and slogan of his campaign – *vikas* or development, *sabka saath*, *sabka vikas*, *achche din* or prosperity. In other words, he donned the mantle of the nationalist leaders of the anti-imperialist struggle. To get the BJP to adopt his new agenda, he had in the run-up to the elections to fight the old guard to put the three main pillars of the BJP agenda till then – building the Ram temple in Ayodhya, abrogation of Article 370, and Uniform Civil Code – on the back-burner. To this day, the BJP governments in the Centre and states have fought all elections and pushed their earlier Hindutva agenda under the overarching promise of good governance (*sushasan*) and development. It has been reported that the RSS cadre campaigned for the NDA in the recent Bihar Assembly elections under those very slogans.

In power, Modi has continued to advance the agenda of earlier governments, both domestically and internationally. On the economic front, Nehru's interpretation of the nationalist agenda, as modified by the 1991 reforms, largely endures. Those reforms included a greater tilt towards the private sector, some pullback in the State's role in economic development, less emphasis on self-reliance, greater reliance on foreign capital and trade, and abandonment of policies aimed at bringing down economic inequality by reducing the income and wealth of the rich. Initially considered the most business-friendly of Prime Ministers, Modi has over time shifted towards a more Nehruvian policy – increasing State intervention, strengthening the public sector, massive investment in infrastructure, greater emphasis on self-reliance, and more expenditure on social welfare.

> Between Nehru and Modi, the nation has seen varied political approaches to governance. Policies have met and diverged, ideologies have shifted, but the bureaucracy has remained a quiet constant, providing permanence despite the disruption and churn

Even "disinvestment", which had a separate ministry in the Vajpayee government with Arun Shourie as minister, is not heard. As earlier, agriculture continues to be low on the list of priorities. But the strength of farmers in the political arena has led to the abandonment of amendments to land acquisition laws and the agriculture reforms legislation. Socialism, defined as reducing economic inequality, has been off the agenda since the 1991 reforms.

On the social welfare front, the realities of electoral competition have forced Modi to do a U-turn on what he disparaged as *revdi* and others as "freebies", and the NDA-BJP governments at the Centre and the states have joined the race to outbid their political opponents for votes. Indeed, governments led by the BJP as well as its opponents have in recent decades benefited from pro-incumbency resulting from increasing outlays for a plethora of welfare schemes, made possible by economic growth and rising incomes due to growth. Electoral considerations are also behind the BJP-RSS support of caste-based reservations. Modi has also recently made a U-turn on the issues of caste census and the enumeration of caste in the national Census. On some issues, he has been seen as advancing the BJP-RSS agenda of undermining caste-based criteria. For example, economic criteria for reservations have been seen to favour the poor of the upper castes and could, in the long run, undermine the caste criteria. Furthermore, Modi has welcomed internal reservations, or quota within quota, for the SCs, possibly because it could undermine the unity of the communities, and reservations themselves. The emergence of women as a distinct and influential constituency in determining electoral outcomes led Modi to initiate the Constitutional Amendment for women's reservation in legislatures, which was passed after a long delay, although its implementation has been inexplicably postponed for several years.

A familiar script, with tweaks

In foreign policy, the refusal to join alliances or blocs has its origin in Jawaharlal Nehru, and has been an unwavering lodestar ever since. Post-1991, in line with economic reforms, the focus shifted to aligning with the advanced Western nations, even while preserving "strategic autonomy". However, the solidarity with the poorer, underdeveloped nations of the Global South and the search for a more just international order, as expressed in organisations and agendas as the Non-Aligned Movement, G77, and the New International Economic Order, was abandoned. This was in line with the abandonment of the objectives of reducing economic inequality and of socialism domestically. But, first, after the freezing of Russian assets by Western powers following its invasion of Ukraine and, more emphatically, after the implementation of Trump's tariffs, the Nehruvian agenda of solidarity with the Global South, together with self-reliance, is very much back on the table. With the attack on Venezuela coming on top of the endless delay in the Indo-US trade deal, the emphasis has taken on even greater urgency. There is one major discontinuity, though: the revanchist rhetoric against Pakistan, which is in line with that against Muslims domestically. But nothing has been heard of the RSS agenda of Akhand Bharat or undivided India. Except, probably, in the recent statement by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh that Sindh could one day be part of India.

On the domestic political and constitutional front, the most contentious issue is the abrogation of Article 370, which gave a special status to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. However, as scholars such as AG Noorani have shown, the content of the Article has been progressively eviscerated since Jawaharlal Nehru. The Modi government only removed the empty shell. In Centre-state relations, the push towards centralisation, which is there in the Constitution itself and pursued by successive governments at the Centre, has been intensified.

Governors in non-NDA states have frequently clashed with the state governments when they have tried to exercise authority over these governments. States under NDA governments have been favoured with more Central investments and projects, and Indian and foreign-linked private sector projects. Besides, states' powers have been clipped and overridden by Central legislation, court orders, Governors' partisan actions, and probes by Central investigative agencies. In the case of the AAP government in the national capital, it took a complex, many-sided, highly coordinated, multi-year plan involving many agencies and institutions, including the BJP in Opposition, to oust a party of greenhorns that had inflicted the most humiliating and crushing defeats from the early days of Modi's prime ministership, from power. All this made dismissing state governments under Article 356 seem almost redundant. In all this, the Modi government was following in the footsteps of its predecessors.

Modi has gone far beyond earlier BJP-RSS leaders in treating the Constitution, nationalist freedom fighters, most importantly Mahatma Gandhi, major past OBC, SC and ST leaders, and the national anthem, song and flag, as sacrosanct. Recently, on the birth anniversary of his *bête noire*, Jawaharlal Nehru, Modi even recognised Nehru's contribution as a freedom fighter and the first Prime Minister. Furthermore, let alone bringing the Hindu Rashtra Constitution issue to the forefront, there is no mention even of reviving an idea such as the Vajpayee government's National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC), which had an open-ended mandate to suggest possible amendments to the Constitution. Stray comments and actions by some Sangh Parivar leaders and BJP ministers and legislators, many of which were quickly retracted following public criticism, may intentionally or not reveal what lies underneath and cannot be said openly at present. Recent examples include a BJP minister in Madhya Pradesh saying that social reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a "British agent" and accusing him of aiding missionaries in religious conversions, and the Rajasthan government's decision to observe the anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition on December 6 as "Shaurya Diwas" (Day of Valour) in schools.

What accounts for this continuity over many decades and across many governments led by rival parties and coalitions with different ideologies and programmes? Who maintains and changes the agenda of the nation in line with rapidly evolving situations, both domestically and internationally? Who places constraints on those who want to challenge and disrupt the national consensus or break away from the mainstream?

The backstage players

It is my argument that it is the bureaucracy, together with the judiciary, that plays that role. From Independence, the national leadership, including Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel, relied on the bureaucrats and judges they inherited from the British Raj, whom they refashioned to serve the nation's agenda and interests. From drafting the Constitution (Benegal Narsing Rau) to building a unified nation from a large number of princely states (V P Menon), the bureaucracy's skills and abilities proved indispensable. For a range of reasons, Nehru, as Prime Minister, was more inclined to depend on select individuals from the bureaucracy than on his party leaders in ministries at the Centre and in the states for governance. Subsequently, especially under Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) gained prominence as the centre of power for decision-making and policy implementation. She relied on key bureaucrats to formulate and execute her political strategy, most importantly, P N Haksar. Additionally, several retired bureaucrats, along with retired senior judges and armed forces personnel, were appointed as Governors of states.

Under Modi, the power of the bureaucracy has reached new heights, starting with the PMO's greater size and importance. Over the years, an unprecedented number of retired bureaucrats have been appointed to key Cabinet positions in his government. Modi's own signal contribution is to forcefully drive the implementation of his government's good governance, development and welfare programmes, which may have been what the bureaucracy wanted in the first place. The key role of the bureaucracy extends to the state governments, except possibly to some extent those run by the Left parties, as well. Another prominent example of this more general trend is that of V K Pandian under Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in Odisha.

The enormous success of the bureaucracy in governance arises from its key role in advising and guiding politicians in power, always promoting their interests, remaining in the background, and not posing a threat to them politically. Their career-long experience in political administration, cohesion as a cadre, expertise and knowledge of public affairs, flexibility in bending but not breaking, enable them to control and restrict politicians and political parties, to provide continuity and overall stability in domestic and foreign policy, and to formulate and implement the agenda of the nation. Something like what can be seen in the British satirical comedy series, *Yes Minister* and *Yes, Prime Minister*, but the failures of politicians in governance have given the bureaucracy vastly greater power.

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 1976

Hope for survivors in Chasnala mine given up

Chasnala, January 19
The faint hope of finding any survivors among the 375 entombed miners went out today, as the first rescue team to have gone down the cave reported that there was no sign of life inside the inundated colliery. The inundation—the worst mining disaster in the country—occurred on December 27 and pumping of water began the following day. The members of a high-level team of investigation said that the mine was filled with the stink of decaying bodies.

25 YEARS AGO: JANUARY 2001

Hinduja brothers get bail

New Delhi, Jan 19
A special CBI court today granted bail to the three Hinduja brothers in the Rs 64 crore Bofors pay-offs case after they appeared before the court which asked them not to leave the country without its permission. "They shall join the investigation as and when required by the CBI and will not leave the country without the permission of the court," said Special Judge Ajit Bharihoke. The next hearing in the matter will now be held on January 30. The Hindujas were given bail after each of them furnished a bail bond.

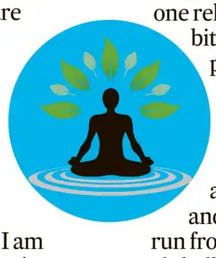
OASIS | ACHARYA PRASHANT

Loneliness is not the enemy

Loneliness is usually treated as an accident, something that happens later in life after a loss or a breakup or a change of city. We imagine a time when we were whole, and then something went wrong. But if one looks honestly, loneliness is not an interruption in life. It is one of its earliest facts.

Watch an infant left alone for a moment. Nothing is physically wrong; the child is fed and warm and safe. Yet the cry begins. The child simply cannot bear to be left alone. The moment a familiar face appears, the crying stops; all it needed was presence. Long before language, before thought, the seed of separation is already planted.

This does not stop with childhood; it becomes our way of living. The ego, the basic "I-sense" we are born with, is incomplete by nature and cannot remain content on its own. It needs something to hold on to, something to define itself through. So the sentence "I am" is never allowed to stand alone; it must be completed: I am successful, I am loved, I belong. Each addition is an attempt to escape the unease of existing without support.



Loneliness is this incompleteness: the restless expectation that something out there will finally plug the inner gap. One keeps moving, from one relationship to the next, one ambition to another, but the hunger persists. The ego can survive only in incompleteness, so satisfaction never arrives.

If this deep hunger is not understood, it does not disappear. It goes underground, and there it turns toxic. People run from it into noise and distraction and shallow bonds. But running only makes it worse. Suppressed pain does not heal; it festers.

Yet if you are honest enough to stay with your loneliness, something begins to shift. When you stop fighting and start observing it, loneliness becomes a teacher. You begin to see how much of life has been driven by the fear of being incomplete, and in that seeing, the grip loosens.

Freedom from loneliness does not come from trying to fill it up with external things. It comes from walking into it, understanding it, letting it speak. Walk into your loneliness, and something unexpected happens. The loneliness that once chased you begins to dissolve. Not because you found better company, but because it finally revealed not just its face, but yours.

SIR EXERCISE: Court seeks transparency, asks poll panel & state govt to ensure fair roll revision

Publish Bengal 'logical discrepancies' list: SC to EC

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

BJP and Trinamool Congress workers during a clash over the submission of Form 7, objecting to the inclusion of voters, as part of the Special Intensive Revision, at Lalbag subdivision in West Bengal's Murshidabad district, on Monday. PTI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Election Commission to display the names of those on the "logical discrepancies" list at gram panchayat bhavans and block offices, saying that the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process in West Bengal must be transparent and should not cause inconvenience.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Dipankar Datta and Joymalya Bagchi directed that offices for submitting documents and objections be set up within panchayat bhavans or block offices, and asked the West Bengal government to provide adequate manpower to assist the election authorities.

The court noted that 1.25 crore voters in the state figure on the "logical discrepancies" list. These discrepancies, arising from progeny linking with the 2002 voter list, include mismatches in parents' names and cases where the age difference between a voter and their parent is less than 15 years or more than 50 years.

The SC observed that the exercise is being carried out strictly under the terms of the constitutional scheme. "Let us ensure that this exercise runs smoothly and is completed on time by ensuring transparent measures that give fair opportunity to all those who, due to some discrepancy, find themselves under unnecessary doubt," the bench said.

"They must be given a fair opportunity, and these are matters we have never closed. If any difficulty arises, we should be able to resolve it."

The SC said that the Director General of Police (DGP) of West Bengal must ensure there are no law and order problems. It also observed that those likely to be affected by the ongoing SIR in West Bengal must be allowed to submit their documents or objections.

The court directed that every district must meticulously comply with the directions issued by the EC or the state government.

During the hearing, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for some of the petitioners, questioned the criteria for issuing notices of hearings on logical discrepancies. He pointed out that names such as "Ganguly" and "Datta" can be spelt in different ways, and such variations are often cited as grounds for notices.

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the poll panel, said that officers have been instructed not to issue notices based on spelling differences. However, he added that cases where the age difference between a voter and their parents is 15 years or less are flagged as a logical discrepancy.

The SC then questioned, "How can a 15-year age gap between mother and son be considered a logical discrepancy? It is not as if we don't have child marriages in the country."

Senior advocate Kalyan Banerjee told the court that notices had been issued even to Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and sitting MPs. He alleged that a "profiling" of voters was being carried out.

Dwivedi denied the allegations, saying, "If the EC is to be distrusted, then let it not conduct the elections at all."

TMC MP Derek O'Brien alleged arbitrariness and procedural irregularities in the SIR of electoral rolls. The application said that since the inception of the SIR process, the EC has been issuing instructions to officers at the ground level through "informal and extra-statutory channels" such as WhatsApp messages and oral directions conveyed during video conferences, instead of written orders.

ROLL SCRUTINY

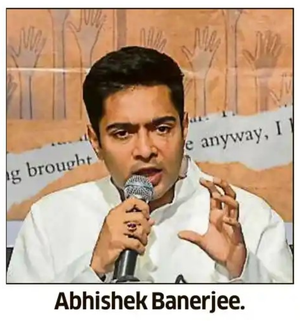
- 1.25 crore Bengal voters flagged for 'logical discrepancies'
- Court orders display of list at panchayat offices
- Tells EC, Bengal govt to ensure fair voter roll revision
- SC questions criteria for notices in voter list exercise

Poll win to follow court victory: TMC

BARASAT (WB), PTI: Senior TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee on Monday said the Supreme Court's direction to the EC to publish the names of electors called for hearings on account of logical discrepancies in enumeration forms is "two tight slaps on the faces of those who tried to deprive people of their fundamental right to vote".

Speaking at a rally at Barasat in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, the TMC national general secretary said this "victory in court" would be followed by the party's "win in polls" likely to take place in April this year.

Referring to the BJP, Banerjee said, "This is a victory of 'Maa Mati Manush' and the people of West Bengal over those who tried to pick and choose one crore citizens and delete their names from electoral rolls. The Supreme Court gave two tight slaps on the faces of those who not only tried to starve the people of West Bengal, but also attempted to deprive them of their fundamental right to vote."



Abhishek Banerjee.

"We defeated them in court today, we will trounce them during polls in April. Stay prepared, West Bengal is not UP, Bihar, MP or Gujarat. This state showed the path to the nation's Independence struggle, its renaissance. We do not bow our heads before outsiders," he added.

On Monday, the SC directed the EC to display the names of those on the "logical discrepancies" list at gram panchayat and block offices in rural areas and ward offices in the urban pockets of West Bengal in the next three days and call them for hearing within 10 days of publication of the list.

"The BJP's SIR game is over," Banerjee said, stating he also had information that the court has asked the poll body to provide receipts of documents submitted by electors appearing for hearings.

"So, Modiji, tell us now who is more powerful? The 10 crore people of West Bengal or BJP zamindars? The tormentors from outside or the toiling masses?" the TMC leader said at the rally.

EC extends SIR deadline to January 30 in Tamil Nadu

CHENNAI, DHNS: Heeding to the demands from various political parties, the Election Commission of India (ECI) on Monday extended to January 30 the time to file claims and objections in connection with the SIR of electoral rolls in Tamil Nadu.

However, the date for the release of the final electoral rolls remains February 17. The extension came a day after the original deadline ended on Sunday.

"The Election Commission of India has decided to extend the period for filing claims and objections up to 30.01.2026 in connection with the ongoing SIR of electoral rolls in Tamil Nadu," a communique from the chief electoral officer said.

By Sunday, as many as 13.03 lakh people had filed Form 6 (enrolling as a new voter), and about 35,000 to remove their names from the list.

Sources said almost all political parties petitioned the ECI to extend the last date for the process to enable more people to enrol as new voters or file objections and claims.

The ECI said the final voters' list will be released on February 17 as scheduled. Tamil Nadu is due for Assembly elections in April-May.

Names of 97.37 lakh voters were dropped in the draft electoral rolls at the end of the first phase of the SIR on December 19. Of this, as many as 66.4 lakh voters have shifted their residences, 26.9 lakh are dead, and 3.98 lakh have enrolled at multiple places.

As expected, women outnumbered men in the number of voters in the draft list as well, with 2.66 crore men voters and 2.77 crore women voters. The number of third gender voters is 7,191.

SC seeks report on Manipur relief camp deficiencies

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Monday directed a court-appointed committee headed by former High Court Chief Justice Gita Mittal to examine deficiencies in relief camps in Manipur and submit a report within two months.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Dipankar Datta and Joymalya Bagchi asked the three-member committee to look into complaints raised by petitioner Anthony Naulak.

The order was passed on a PIL after the Manipur High Court had declined to grant relief in a plea concerning Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) housed in relief camps in Churachandpur district.

The court asked the committee to submit its report at the earliest, preferably within two months.

"The high court has already declined to go into the merits of the matter, as this court is seized of the issue and has constituted a three-member committee to examine various aspects. The petitioner (Naulak) claims to have seen multiple relief camps that lack food, medical facilities etc. On instructions, the Additional Solicitor General submitted that the representation has been forwarded to the three-member committee," the court noted while disposing of Naulak's petition.

7 held in Gujarat with cobra venom worth Rs 5.85 cr

AHMEDABAD, DHNS: The Surat Police on Monday seized suspected cobra venom worth Rs 5.85 crore and apprehended seven people who were trying to sell it.

The police said they were acting on a tip-off that a gang was selling smuggled cobra venom. They laid a trap and offered Rs 8 crore for the venom, using a person acting like a potential buyer.

The cops said seven persons were arrested and 6.5 ml of cobra venom was seized from their possession.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Rajdipsinh Nakum told reporters that it was the biggest seizure of cobra venom in the state.

He said that snake venom was used for preparing intoxicating substances — called "snakebite" — for rave parties, besides making life-saving medicines.

He said that the police had registered a case as "janva jog" (station diary entry), and that a formal case would be filed in accordance with sections of the Wildlife Protection Act — which makes dealing in snake venom a punishable crime — once the forensic examinations established the exact substance.

Its recreational use attracts charges under laws governing narcotics.

Akhilesh's brother plans to divorce wife for 'being selfish'

LUCKNOW, DHNS: Prateek Yadav, brother of Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, said Monday that he plans to seek a divorce from his wife, Uttar Pradesh Women's Commission Vice-Chairperson Aparna Bisht, accusing her of being "selfish" and of having ruined his family.

In a post on Instagram, Prateek said he was in a "very bad mental health condition" and that he was "unfortunate to have married her".

"I am going to divorce this selfish woman as soon as possible. She ruined my family ties. All she wants is to become famous and influential," the post said.

"Right now, I am in a very bad mental health condition and she does not bother...," he wrote. There was no immediate response from Aparna Bisht. However, her brother, Aman Bisht, claimed that Prateek's Instagram account had been "hacked".

Aparna and Prateek married in 2011 after a long-standing relationship dating back to their school days.

Rahul accuses BJP of trying to centralise power by scrapping MGNREGA

Says it doesn't want to ensure minimum wages to workers

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

LoP in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi felicitates Malayalam writer M Leelavathy, after she received the Priyadarshini Literary Award by the KPCC, during a ceremony in Kalamassery, Kochi, on Monday. PTI

Accusing the BJP government at the Centre of trying to sabotage the decentralisation of powers through local bodies, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that the attack on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was also part of the move.

Addressing newly-elected Congress members to Kerala's local bodies in Kochi on Monday, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha said the Central government was aiming to centralise power.

Hence, it was working against schemes like the MGNREGA, which was being implemented through the local bodies, he said.

He recollected that the UPA government initiated the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments to empower local bodies with the three-tier Panchayati Raj system as well as the MGNREGA to ensure minimum wages to the poor.

"The MGNREGA transformed the lives of millions of people. The Centre was trying to destroy it despite this. The BJP-RSS does not want to ensure minimum wages to workers across the country. While the Congress stood for decentralisation, the BJP-RSS stands for centralisation," he said at the "Mahapanchayat".

Rahul's focus on the MGNREGA assumes much significance as the Congress in Kerala has already decided to make it one of the key campaign issues for the coming Assembly election.

Rahul also said that in the Assembly polls, the people of Kerala would raise their voice to protect democracy and the Constitution. Under the BJP rule, the nation's wealth was becoming concentrated with a few businessmen, he alleged.

Rahul also expressed confidence that the Congress-led United Democratic Front would win the Kerala Assembly elections. Congress leaders would be able to understand the real issues of the people, like unemployment, he said.

Earlier in the day, Rahul presented the "Priyadarshini literary award" to veteran writer M Leelavathy at her residence in Kochi.

RAHUL GANDHI
Senior Congress leader

"The BJP and the RSS stood for centralisation, while the Congress stood for decentralisation. They want compliance from people for India, not the voice of the people of India.

Congress spreading misinformation: Govt

AJITH ATHRADY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Insisting that the VB-G RAM G Act will strengthen the right to work, Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Monday accused Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi on Monday of spreading misinformation about the new legislation.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan

"I would like to tell Rahul Gandhiji and Mallikarjun Khargeji that by spreading misinformation about the VB-G RAM G Act, they are not strengthening but rather weakening the Congress," Chouhan said while addressing media persons here.

Terming the Congress claim that the right to work is being snatched away a "lie", the minister said that the NDA government tried to make the MGNREGA better and spent Rs 9 lakh crore.

Chouhan claimed that of the nearly 10 crore assets created under the MGNREGA, around 8.5 crore were built during the Narendra Modi government's tenure.

The minister was countering the Congress's 45-day nationwide campaign, the "MGNREGA Bachao Sangram", against the repeal of the UPA-era Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), on January 10.

The Opposition party is demanding the withdrawal of the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act and restoration of the MGNREGA.

Chouhan said that "Instead of 100 days, we are now giving 125 days of work.... Not just the right to work, we have also made a provision for giving an unemployment allowance within 15 days.

"They are spreading misinformation that employment would be provided only in certain panchayats. I want to clarify that the scheme would be implemented in all panchayats," he said.

On the 60:40 Centre-state funding ratio that has been criticised by Opposition parties and activists, Chouhan said, "There will be no additional burden on the states."

Rescued beggar turns out to be 'millionaire', but kin claims 'misunderstanding'

INDORE, PTI: Three houses, three autorickshaws and a chauffeur-driven car. One would think these belonged to a jeweller from Indore's Sarafa Bazaar, not a leprosy-afflicted man, who moves around inconspicuously on a wheeled board, seeking alms, but silently lending lakhs in the famed bullion market.

ALMS TO ASSETS

- The 50-year-old man has reportedly amassed property worth several lakh rupees by seeking alms
- He owns three concrete houses, including a three-story building
- Owns three autorickshaws that he rents out
- Has a chauffeur-driven car
- Has lent Rs 4-5 lakh to people in the bullion market

Officials were left stunned recently when an anti-beggary drive led them to a 50-year-old man who has reportedly amassed property worth several lakh rupees by seeking alms, but the episode took a new turn on Monday when a close relative of the beggar dismissed the administration's claim as false, saying they had some "misunderstanding".

Women and Child Development Department official Dinesh Mishra said a leprosy patient was rescued from the Sarafa area following information from local residents.

Mishra said, "We have learned that this man owns three pucca houses, including a three-story building. In addition, he owns three auto-rickshaws that he rents out.

The man has been begging since 2021-22, and it has also been revealed that he has lent Rs 4 lakh to Rs 5 lakh to people in the bullion market, from which he charges daily interest, he said.

The officer explained, "He earns Rs 1,000 to 2,000 per day from this interest. In addition, he receives Rs 400 to 500 daily in alms."

However, his nephew told reporters that the three-storey house, which the administration claims is owned by his uncle, is actually in his mother's name. "... I pay the instalments for the loan taken for the house. We have all the documents," he insisted.

"My uncle lends money on interest to people doing small jobs in the bullion market. During my meeting with him, he said that he used to go to Sarafa Bazaar to collect this money, and due to some misunderstanding, his photographs were circulated as a beggar," he claimed.

CONTRACT ROW

Telangana ministers, media clash over coal mining tender

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

High drama is unfolding in Telangana, where two ministers from the Congress Cabinet are said to be clashing over a lucrative coal-mining contract from the state-run Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL).

Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, who oversees the Finance and Energy portfolios in Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's Cabinet, publicly announced on Sunday that he had directed SCCL to cancel tenders for mining the Naini coal block in Odisha's Angul district.

The move followed allegations by a Telugu news outlet that he had favoured a particular company, in collusion with another media channel's owner, while blocking a rival minister's bid.

The controversy escalated when the Telugu channel, whose owner allegedly showed interest in the mining contract, aired a separate claiming the rival minister was romantically involved with a woman IAS officer — apparently to tarnish his image.

The report outraged Telangana's IAS and IPS officers, prompting police complaints that led to the brief arrest and later bail of the channel's journalists.

At a news conference on Sunday, Vikramarka dismissed the claims as attempts to mislead the public. "I'm not afraid of such stories," he declared, noting that the SCCL had followed procedure in the issuing of tenders, but received no bids.

He said he had instructed the company to float fresh tenders, compliant with the Central government's guidelines for public-sector undertakings.

A state-run mining company, the SCCL was allocated the Naini coal block — its first project outside Telangana — in Odisha. Operations to supply coal for power plants and potentially other buyers began in April 2025.

The first Telugu outlet alleged that Vikramarka and the other media-house owner's keen interest in the tender created deliberate roadblocks for the competing minister.

Seizing the opportunity, the BRS in the Opposition demanded a CBI inquiry into the tender cancellation. Former minister and BRS senior leader T Harish Rao alleged deep irregularities in the process.

Over a dozen detained for protest bid at Manikarnika Ghat

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Over a dozen members of the Pal community were detained on Monday as the police used force to disperse a group of people that raised slogans and tried to march to the iconic Manikarnika Ghat in Varanasi to protest against what they alleged was the "demolition" of the statue of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar during the ongoing renovation works there.

Sources said scores of Pal community members tried to force their way to the Manikarnika Ghat to verify the police's claim that no statue or temple had been demolished.

The police initially tried to persuade them to retreat, but they refused, prompting the cops to use force to disperse them.

This led to a scuffle between them and the protesters. Sources said 18 members of the Pal community were subsequently detained.

The protests came a day after the police booked eight people — including Aam Aadmi Party Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh and Bihar Congress leader Pappu Yadav — for "circulating fake AI-generated videos" showing destruction at the Manikarnika Ghat.

The sources said the accused persons had been asked to respond to the charges within 72 hours, failing which they might be arrested.

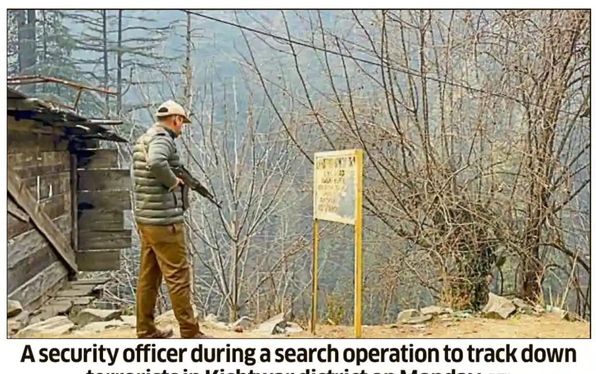
UP Chief Minister Adityanath on Saturday accused the Congress of running a disinformation campaign using AI-generated videos regarding the developmental works being undertaken at the Manikarnika Ghat.

The officials also rejected the allegations that temples and statues were demolished, and said that all the idols and statues had been preserved and would be reinstalled after the renovation.

Paratrooper succumbs to injuries as anti-terror op continues in Kishtwar

Officials say at least 2 terrorists 'affiliated' with JeM are trapped in area

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS



A security officer during a search operation to track down terrorists in Kishtwar district on Monday. PTI

A Special Forces paratrooper critically wounded in a fierce encounter with terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district on Sunday succumbed to his injuries, as security forces pressed on with a large-scale search operation in the upper reaches of the region for a second consecutive day on Monday.

The soldier, identified as Havildar Gajendra Singh, was among eight personnel injured during a counter-terror operation launched on Sunday in the Sonnar village area near Mandral-Singhpora in the Chatroo belt. Officials said the troops came under a sudden grenade attack by terrorists hiding in dense forest cover, resulting in splinter injuries to several soldiers.

Havildar Singh, who belonged to the Special Forces, passed away during treatment at a military hospital on the intervening night of January 18 and 19, officials said.

The army paid tribute to him, describing his death as a supreme sacrifice made while "gallantly executing" a counter-terrorism mission in the Singpora area during the ongoing operation, codenamed TRASHI-I. Senior officers and personnel of the White Knight Corps expressed solidarity with the bereaved family and honoured his courage and devotion to duty.

The operation, temporarily halted late Sunday night due to darkness and difficult terrain, was resumed on Monday.

According to officials, two to three terrorists, suspected to be affiliated with the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), are believed to be trapped in the area.

9 Maoists with Rs 45-lakh bounty surrender in Chhattisgarh

GARIABAND (CHHATTISGARH), PTI: Nine Naxalites carrying a cumulative reward of Rs 45 lakh surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Gariaband district on Monday, a police official said, in continuous trend of rebels laying down arms ahead of the Centre's deadline to eradicate Left-wing extremism.

The surrendered cadres, including six women, belonged to Sinapali and SDK (Sonabeda-Dharambandha-Kholibatar area committees of Naxals and they turned themselves in before senior police officials citing disillusionment with the "hollow" Maoist ideology and hardships of forest life, Inspector General of Police, Raipur Range, Amresh Mishra said.

With this, 180 Naxalites have surrendered so far this year in the state.

Associated with the outlawed outfit CPI (Maoist) since 2004, Anju alias Kavita (40), a divisional committee member and SDK area committee secretary, was wanted in 19 cases registered in Gariaband district, while Baldev alias Wamanwatti, in-charge of Sinapali area committee, a native of Bastar district, was wanted in 29 cases in Gariaband, the IGP said.

On January 15, as many as 52 Naxalites, 49 of them carrying a collective bounty of over Rs 1.41 crore, surrendered Bijapur district which falls in the Bastar region of the state. More than 1,500 Naxalites surrendered in the state in 2025.

The Centre has resolved to eliminate Naxalism from the country by March 31 this year.

Kerala man ends life after viral video by YouTuber

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS/PTI

ONLINE CAMPAIGN

- Man accused of inappropriate behaviour on bus
- Family to pursue legal action against woman
- Friends say he suffered mental agony and humiliation from online campaign

The family of a 42-year-old man from Kerala, who died by suicide following a viral social media campaign accusing him of misbehaving with a woman on a bus, is planning to pursue legal action against the woman behind the campaign. The Kerala State Human Rights Commission has also ordered a police probe into an incident.

Deepak U, a resident of Govindapuram in Kozhikode, was found hanging in his house on Sunday. Relatives suspect he took his life due to the mental agony and humiliation caused by the online campaign.

Deepak, who worked as a sales executive at a textile shop in Kozhikode, had travelled to Kannur on Friday for job-related purposes. During the journey, a woman passenger, who is also a YouTuber, posted a video on social media alleging that he had touched her inappropriately with sexual intent. The video quickly went viral.

Friends and relatives said Deepak was deeply disturbed by the allegations. He had even spoken to some of his friends about pursuing legal steps to have the videos removed. However, on Sunday morning, he was found hanging. He was the only son of Choyi and Kanyaka.

His employer and friends described him as a man of good character. The case has sparked criticism of social media campaigns targeting individuals.

DIG probe

The Kerala State Human Rights Commission instructed North Zone Deputy Inspector General of police to probe the incident and submit a report within a week. The case will be taken up for consideration at the commission's sitting to be held in the district on February 19.

(If you are in distress or having suicidal tendencies, please reach out to these 24/7 helplines: KIRAN 1800-599-0019 or Arogya Sahayavani at 104 for help)

No HC relief for Sengar in death case of Unnao rape survivor's father

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Delhi High Court on Monday refused to suspend the 10-year jail term of expelled BJP leader Kuldeep Singh Sengar in the custodial death case of the Unnao rape survivor's father on the grounds of delay in trial, saying it was partly caused by the multiple applications he had filed in the matter.

"The application seeking suspension of sentence is dismissed," said Justice Ravinder Dudeja. The judge observed that while Sengar has undergone prolonged incarceration of about seven and a half years, relief could not be granted on the ground of delay alone, as the appellant had repeatedly moved applications for interim suspension, extension of bail, and regular suspension of sentence.

"Purpose would be served if the appeal were heard on merit in an expeditious manner," Justice Dudeja said.

"In the facts and circumstances and after considering the statutory framework, the judicial principles governing suspension, the antecedents of the appellant, and the absence of any new circumstance that has emerged, the court finds no ground to grant relief," the court opined.

The court listed the appeal for hearing on February 3.

Talking to PTI over the phone from Delhi, the rape survivor expressed satisfaction with the court's verdict.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

I THINK HALF THE FUN OF WATCHING FOOTBALL IS THE SNACKS!
TRUE!
ACTUALLY, DOING PRETTY MUCH ANYTHING IS BETTER WITH SNACKS
ALSO TRUE
HECK, EVEN SNACKING WITH SNACKS IS BETTER!
AMEN, PAL!

Hagar The Horrible

I REALLY ADMIRE BROTHER OLAF! HE'S SO GOOD, I'VE NEVER HEARD HIM UTTER A SINGLE BAD WORD!
YOU'VE NEVER PLAYED THE LINKS AFTER CHURCH!
4-3

Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

HEY, MANAGER, YOU SHOULD READ THIS BOOK
IT'S CALLED, "WINNING AND TEN OTHER CHOICES"
WHAT ARE THE TEN OTHER CHOICES?
TYING, LOSING, LOSING, LOSING, LOSING, LOSING, LOSING AND LOSING!

Marvin

THANKS, EVERYONE IN THE "NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH DOGS," FOR RIDDING OUR HOMES OF THE STINKY RACCOON GANG!
HEY... WHERE'S ALAN?
HE CAN'T LEAVE HIS YARD OR HIS COLLAR WILL SHOCK HIM

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ZLGEA

SOTDO

ITNEIF

PCAINT

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

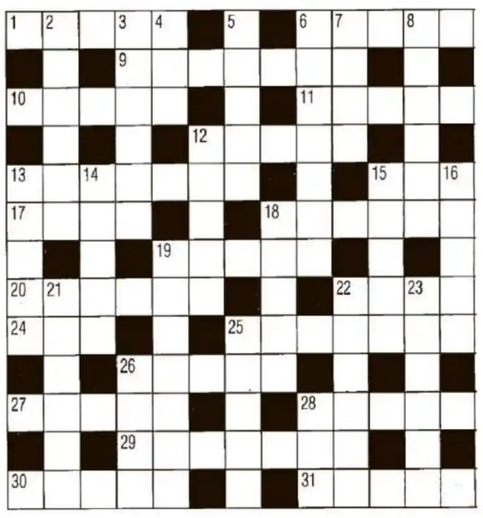
©2025 Tribune Content Agency, LLC
All Rights Reserved.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PUTTY MONEY STRAND KERNEL
Answer: Saying it would be hard to build a tunnel beneath the Hudson River was an — UNDERSTATEMENT

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12335



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
1 A failure has to be wrong (5)
6 Does even one constitute traffic? (5)
9 A dodgy car with a hole in it can kill you! (7)
10 Set out to be looked at? (5)
11 In the forest, able to read a letter (5)
12 A little fancy man? (5)
13 He delivers most, perhaps, in a vessel (7)
15 A little treasure is good for them (3)
17 The one wantonly reduced by 50% (4)
18 A hat of dear style (6)
19 Serving in a launderette (5)
20 Important old city gent (6)
22 Principally used in thermostats (4)
24 Dad's dance step? Perhaps not (3)
25 A foul punishment? (7)
26 To do so seems unfriendly to a skinhead (5)
27 Do fully (5)
28 Half a ton (5)
29 Maybe train as a skilled worker (7)
30 Find ale is swilled by sailors (5)
31 To lift by the ears is maybe out of line (5)

DOWN
2 One religiously showing there's something heavenly about a hearty sermon? (6)
3 Short, being of the Etruscan type? (6)
4 Chuck, it seems, is a bit wishy-washy (3)
5 A clear field (5)
6 Just the coach for rough terrain (7)
7 Exceptionally fine rear view (4)
8 Being smart, many a woman is right (6)
12 Maybe a pint of emulsion (5)
13 What the toast may do when you're out of bed after a drink (3,2)
14 Missiles damaging to foliage (5)
15 Turn and move left with a writer (5)
16 He'll be right in time (5)
18 Honoured with a meal outside the Turk's head (5)
19 A horse to fancy in an oddly heady way (7)
21 A nicer version by a French dramatist (6)
22 She's accommodating where boats are concerned (6)
23 Declares that tastes vary (6)
25 Gave about a pound for something to wear (5)
26 Great player in the Test arena (4)
28 Much like the East (3)

ACROSS
1 Dog lead (5)
6 Suspends (5)
9 Inclined to cry (7)
10 Cheroot, say (5)
11 Aircraft detection system (5)
12 Is priced at (5)
13 Without end (7)
15 Baked food (3)
17 Dry (4)
18 Small metallic missile (6)
19 Hard mineral (5)
20 Comes about (6)
22 Facility (4)
24 Stripling (3)
25 Wash and iron (7)
26 Seat (5)
27 Capital of Vietnam (5)
28 Traffic light colour (5)
29 Medium (7)
30 Beautiful girl (5)
31 Exclusive (5)

DOWN
2 Newspaper boss (6)
3 Remained (6)
4 That woman (3)
5 Mistake (5)
6 Causing distress or injury (7)
7 Unfortunately (4)
8 Goalkeeper (6)
12 Surrenders (5)
13 Ending in death (5)
14 Stiff (5)
15 Appeal humbly (5)
16 Anaesthetic (5)
18 Out and away (2,3)
19 Dome-shaped hairstyle (7)
21 Plunder (6)
22 Tooth covering (6)
23 Choose (6)
25 Fibbers (5)
26 Fossil fuel (4)
28 Generation (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12334

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 3, Stool 8, Unf-it 10, Bunch 11, Nip 12, L-ate-R 13, Keep fit 15, Rip-on 18, Log 19, Mod-Ena 21, Leghorn 22, Thus 23, Irma 24, M-eth-ods 26, Flag-on 29, I-re 31, Fuses 32, Spe-are-d 34, Atlas 35, Ll-p 36, Pearl 37, Blood 38, Synod.
DOWN: 1, Inner 2, Ti-pp-Les 4, T-hat 5, Oberon 6, Lurid 7, Acton 9, Fie 12, Light-en 14, Fog 16, P-ear-S 17, Nat-Al 19, (Goodbye) Mr Chips 20, Staff 21, Lucas 23, Id-eal-ly 24, Mostly 25, Ore 27, Luger 28, G-ears 30, De-pot 32, Sago 33, Rio.

EASY
ACROSS: 3, Rebus 8, Habit 10, Nippy 11, Gun 12, Jails 13, Rostrum 15, Oasis 18, Nap 19, Palace 21, Demigod 22, Hair 23, Seat 24, Meander 26, Waiter 29, Tin 31, Steel 32, Pegasus 34, Alter 35, Tot 36, Lasso 37, Hotel 38, Ewers.
DOWN: 1, Wagon 2, Vintner 4, Edam 5, Unload 6, Sisal 7, Optic 9, Bus 12, Jupiter 14, Ram 16, Saver 17, Sects 19, Pointer 20, Thaws 21, Dixie 23, Senator 24, Mellow 25, Dig 27, Atlas 28, Tease 30, Outer 32, Peer 33, Sot,.

◆SU-DO-KU-6808◆

5							2	
	2	1	9					3
					2	8		1
			3	7		4		
	4	8	1		9	3	5	
		7		8	5			
9		4	8					
8					1	9	4	
	6							8

hard

SOLUTION TO 6807

1	2	9	6	3	7	4	5	8
4	3	8	1	2	5	7	9	6
5	7	6	9	8	4	3	2	1
9	5	1	7	6	3	8	4	2
8	6	2	4	5	9	1	3	7
3	4	7	8	1	2	5	6	9
7	1	5	2	4	6	9	8	3
6	8	3	5	9	1	2	7	4
2	9	4	3	7	8	6	1	5

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

©2025 Mattel, SCRABBLE™ and SCRABBLE tiles, including S1 tiles, are trademarks of Mattel.

L E Y U U L P — Double Word Score — RACK 1
R S E U M A E — RACK 2
R S E E E F T — Triple Word Score — RACK 3
D R A A E T G — RACK 4

PAR SCORE 110-120
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

P O G Y
P R E P A C K
C L I P P E R
E R O D I N G

RACK 1 = 18
RACK 2 = 67
RACK 3 = 76
RACK 4 = 59
JUDD'S TOTAL 220

PAR SCORE 145-155

HITORI-3262

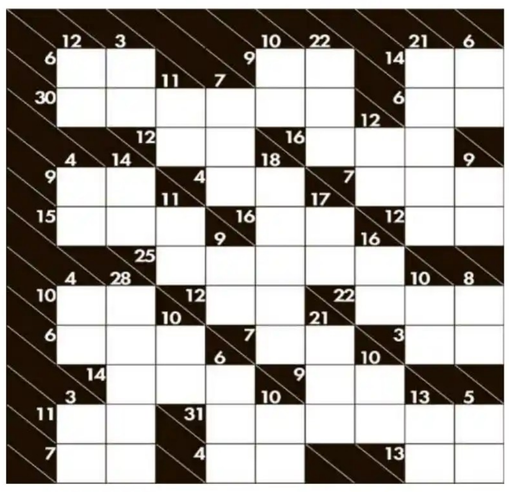
8	3	5	4	7	2	4	6
7	4	6	2	4	4	1	3
1	1	4	3	5	4	2	8
6	2	4	5	6	3	7	4
2	4	2	8	3	5	6	1
5	3	2	8	1	2	3	2
1	6	3	7	2	8	5	2
1	7	4	1	6	4	2	4

SOLUTION TO 3261

6	■	1	7	2	4	■	8
2	7	3	■	8	■	6	4
■	3	8	4	7	6	5	■
7	■	2	5	■	3	■	6
5	8	6	■	4	■	1	2
8	■	7	2	5	1	4	■
4	6	■	8	1	7	■	5
■	1	4	■	6	2	8	3

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3262



SOLUTION TO 3261

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3802

■					6	9		■
1	■					7	■	
		5				■		
			■		■	6		7
				■	8			
			■		■	1	3	9
		■	7	2		■		8
	3				1		■	
■					5		4	■

SOLUTION TO 3801

9	8	6	5	4	1	2	7	3
2	4	5	7	3	6	1	9	8
7	3	1	9	2	8	5	6	4
3	5	4	2	9	7	8	1	6
1	7	2	8	6	4	3	5	9
8	6	9	1	5	3	4	2	7
6	9	8	3	1	5	7	4	2
5	2	3	4	7	9	6	8	1
4	1	7	6	8	2	9	3	5

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

DEMOGRAPHIC FREEFALL

China's population falls for fourth year as births hit record low

Demographic decline deepens despite policy changes

BEIJING, PTI

China's population shrank for the fourth consecutive year as birth rates in 2025 fell by about 10 million from a decade earlier, a trend widely attributed to the long-term effects of the former one-child policy.

According to data released by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on Monday, only 7.92 million babies were born in 2025, compared with 9.54 million in 2024 — a decline of 17 per cent.

This marked the lowest number of births since records began in 1949 and broke the previous low set in 2023, the year India overtook China as the world's most populous country, according to a United Nations report.

Based on current fertility rates, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) estimated in 2024 that China's population would decline to 633 million by 2100.

As per NBS data, China's total population fell by 3.39 million in 2025 to 1.4049 billion, down from 1.4083 billion a year earlier.

China is also grappling with a rapidly ageing population. Official data show that by the end of 2024, the number of people aged 60 and above had reached 310 million. This figure is projected to exceed 400 million by 2035.

By sheer numbers, last year marked the steepest annual population decline on record, apart from the devastating famine between 1959 and 1961, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Meanwhile, about 11.31 million people died last year — one of the highest totals in five decades.

China's demographic crisis is widely blamed on the decades-long one-child policy enforced by the ruling Communist Party. Amid warnings that the trend could severely impact economic growth, Beijing scrapped the policy in 2016 and allowed couples to have two children.

When that failed to reverse the decline, the government revised the policy again in 2021, permitting couples to have three children, as authorities sought to counter reluctance driven by rising living costs.

In recent years, China has rolled out measures to boost birth rates, including a national childcare subsidy scheme offering up to 10,800 RMB (USD 1,534) per child annually. Beijing has also increased the condom tax to encourage larger families.

"The pace of population decline in China is striking, particularly in the absence of major shocks," said Su Yue, principal economist for China at the Economist Intelligence Unit. She noted that reluctance among young people to marry, coupled with rising economic pressures — especially the perceived cost for women of stepping away from work — has acted as a major deterrent to childbirth.

Rescue workers search amid the debris at a shopping mall in Karachi on Monday. AFP

Death toll in Karachi mall fire rises to 26

KARACHI, PTI: The death toll from a major fire at a shopping mall in Pakistan's financial capital Karachi rose to 26 on Monday, as the search continues for dozens of missing people, officials said.

Officials said the toll could increase further following the blaze, which broke out late Saturday night at Gul Plaza, a wholesale and retail market housing shops in the basement, mezzanine and three additional floors.

The fire was brought under control by Sunday night, nearly 24 hours after it erupted. The death toll from the incident has risen to 26 as more bodies were recovered from the now-gutted shopping plaza, Rescue 1122 spokesperson Hassaan Ul Haseeb Khan said in a statement on Monday.

According to Karachi Commissioner Hassan Naqvi, the death toll could surge to over 50. Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah has announced PKR 10 million ($36,000 approx) in compensation for the victims' families.

"There has been a considerable loss of lives in this incident... We have recovered 15 bodies... As per the latest figures as of 1 pm, around 65 people who were reported to have come to Gul Plaza are missing. So, in total, around 80 people (have died] in this," Shah said.

40 killed in Spanish high-speed train collision

Crash toll expected to rise as recovery continues

ADAMUZ (SPAIN), AFP

The death toll from a high-speed train collision in southern Spain rose to 40 on Monday as the government vowed a full investigation into its causes.

The crash late on Sunday is Spain's deadliest train accident since 2013, when 80 people died after a train veered off a curved section of track outside the northwestern city of Santiago de Compostela.

The latest happened when a train operated by rail company Iryo travelling from Malaga to Madrid derailed near Adamuz in Andalusia. It crossed onto the other track, where it crashed into an oncoming train, which also derailed.

There are currently 40 confirmed deaths from the accident, the head of the regional government of Andalucia, Juan Manuel Moreno, told a news conference, raising the toll from 39. It will take 24-48 hours "to know with certainty how many deaths have resulted from this terrible accident," he added. Heavy machinery was deployed earlier on Monday to lift the most severely damaged train carriages and give rescuers better access to the site of the disaster.

Over 120 people were injured, with 41 still in hospitals in the nearby city of Cordoba. Moreno said. Relatives and friends of missing passengers have turned to social media, posting photos in an effort to find them. "This is a day of sorrow for all of Spain, for our entire country," Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said during a visit to Adamuz as he declared three days of mourning. "We will uncover the answer, and once the cause of this tragedy is determined, we will present it with absolute transparency."

Aerial footage of the crash site from Spain's Guardia Civil police force showed the two trains far apart, as rescuers in high-visibility neon vests worked nearby.

Unlike the 2013 accident, the derailment occurred on a straight section of track, and the trains were travelling within the speed limit, officials said.

Transport Minister Oscar Puente said the first train to derail was "practically new" and the section of the track where the disaster happened had been recently renovated, making the accident "extremely strange".

Members of the Spanish Civil Guard, along with other emergency personnel, work next to one of the trains involved in the accident, at the site of a deadly derailment of two high-speed trains near Adamuz, in Cordoba, Spain, on Monday. REUTERS

Blast at Chinese restaurant in Kabul kills 7

KABUL, AFP: A blast at a Chinese restaurant in central Kabul on Monday killed at least seven people and wounded more than a dozen others, emergency services said.

An AFP journalist saw police vehicles and an ambulance at the scene following the explosion on a street known for its flower sellers in the Shahr-e-Naw area.

Kabul police spokesman Khalid Zadran said the explosion occurred at the Chinese Noodle restaurant, which he said mainly served Chinese Muslims. "A Chinese Muslim, Ayub, and six Afghans were killed, and several others were wounded. The blast occurred near the kitchen," Zadran said.

The police spokesman, who said the cause was under investigation, had earlier said the blast hit a hotel.

Italian NGO EMERGENCY said its hospital nearby had received "seven people dead on arrival", with 13 others admitted to the surgical department. "Among the wounded are four women and a child," Dejan Panic, the NGO's country director, said in a statement.

The owner of a flower shop, requesting anonymity for security reasons, said the blast happened at around 3:30 pm at the other end of the street from his business.

Trump links Greenland threat to Nobel Peace Prize snub

EU considers tariffs on $108 billion of US imports

PARIS/OSLO, REUTERS

US President Donald Trump linked his drive to take control of Greenland to his failure to win the Nobel Peace Prize, saying he no longer thought "purely of Peace" as the row over the island on Monday threatened to reignite a trade war with Europe.

Trump has intensified his push to wrest control of Greenland from fellow Nato member Denmark, threatening punitive tariffs on countries which stand in his way and prompting the European Union to weigh on hitting back the US with a $108 billion tariffs.

The dispute is threatening to upend the Nato alliance that has underpinned Western security for decades and which was already under strain over the war in Ukraine and Trump's refusal to protect allies which do not spend enough on defence. It has also plunged trade relations between the EU and the US, the bloc's biggest export market, into renewed uncertainty after the two sides painstakingly reached a trade deal last year in response to Trump's swingeing tariffs.

In a written message to Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Stoere that was seen by Reuters, Trump said: "Considering your Country decided not to give me the Nobel Peace Prize for having stopped 8 Wars PLUS, I no longer feel an obligation to think purely of Peace, although it will always be predominant."

The Norwegian Nobel Committee annoyed Trump by awarding the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize not to him but to Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado. Trump also repeated his accusation that Denmark cannot protect Greenland from Russia or China. "... and why do they have a 'right of ownership' anyway?" he wrote.

Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer delivers a statement on Greenland in London on Monday. Starmer called for calm talks to avert a possible trade war with the US. AFP

SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE

- European Union will hold an emergency summit on Thursday to weigh its response to Trump's threat tariff threat over Greenland.
- Nato will keep working with Denmark and Greenland on security of the Arctic area, the military alliance's Secretary General Mark Rutte said on Monday.

Japan PM calls snap election on Feb 8

TOKYO, AFP: Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said Monday she would dissolve parliament this week ahead of a snap election on February 8, hoping for a stronger mandate to push through her ambitious policy agenda.

The country's first woman leader is banking on her high poll numbers to lead the unpopular ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) to victory. "Is Sanae Takaichi fit to be prime minister? I wanted to ask the sovereign people to decide," she said.

Following the dissolution of the lower house on January 23, the schedule will be set for campaigning to start on January 27.

Italian fashion king Valentino dies at 93

ROME, AFP

One of the top designers of his era, Italy's elegance aficionado Valentino Garavani spent nearly half a century dressing the world's great beauties, from Jackie Kennedy to Princess Diana, before his death on Monday at the age of 93.

"Valentino Garavani passed away today at his Roman residence, surrounded by his loved ones," his Rome-based foundation wrote on social media.

A funeral is planned for Friday in the Italian capital, with a lying in state on Wednesday and Thursday. Best known simply as Valentino, the designer's creations — many of them in "Valentino red" — were worn by the who's who of the international elite, from Elizabeth Taylor, Audrey Hepburn and Nancy Reagan to Sharon Stone, Julia Roberts and Gwyneth Paltrow in recent years.

When the empress of Iran, Farah Pahlavi, fled the country during the 1979 revolution, she was wearing a coat made by Valentino. Dubbed "the Sheik of Chic" by Women's Wear Daily in the 1980s, Valentino was celebrated by The New York Times in 1997 for his "single-minded dedication to glamour". On the catwalk and in his own life, Valentino exuded luxury down to the last detail, from his immaculate hair to his caramel tan.

With his five pet pug dogs and a private jet, he shuttled between his Roman palace, New York apartment, château near Paris, chalet in Switzerland and his 50-metre yacht. Named after silent film star Rudolph Valentino, Valentino Garavani was born on May 11, 1932, in Voghera, a small town south of Milan. His father owned an electric cable business.

As a boy, he asked for made-to-measure shoes and showed an early passion for fashion. "I have had this illness since childhood," he told the Italian edition of Elle magazine in 2007. "I only like beautiful things."

Fashion designer Valentino Garavani. REUTERS FILE

B'desh court opens Hindu monk's trial over murder of lawyer

DHAKA, PTI: A court in Bangladesh on Monday indicted Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das and 38 others in connection with the death of a lawyer in the southeastern port city of Chattogram in November 2024.

Das, a spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatani Jagran Jote, was arrested at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on November 25, 2024, on charges of sedition. A former ISKCON leader, Das was denied bail and sent to jail by a Chattogram court. His arrest triggered protests the following day, with supporters demonstrating in Dhaka and other areas. The protests turned violent in Chattogram, where a lawyer was killed on November 26.

WIDENING GAP

Billionaires' wealth hits new peak as their clout grows

REUTERS

Billionaire wealth surged at three times its recent pace last year to reach its highest level on record, deepening economic and political divides that threaten democratic stability, anti-poverty group Oxfam said on Monday.

In a report timed for the opening of the World Economic Forum in Davos, the charity said the fortunes of global billionaires jumped 16% in 2025 to $18.3 trillion, extending an 81% rise since 2020.

The gains happened even as one in four people worldwide struggle to eat regularly and nearly half the global population live in poverty.

Oxfam's study, which draws on academic research and data sources ranging from the World Inequality Database to Forbes' rich list, argues that the wealth boom is being matched by a dramatic concentration of political clout, with billionaires 4,000 times more likely than ordinary citizens to hold political office.

The group links the latest wealth surge to policies under U.S. President Donald Trump, whose second administration has cut taxes, shielded multinational corporations from international pressure and eased scrutiny of monopolies.

Soaring valuations of artificial intelligence companies have added further windfall gains for already wealthy investors.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

A group of civilians smash a statue of a Syrian Democratic Forces fighter after the Syrian army took control of Tabqa city on Sunday. REUTERS

Nigerian gunmen abduct over 150 Christian worshippers

▸ Gunmen abducted more than 150 worshippers in simultaneous attacks on three separate churches in northwest Nigeria, AP/PTI reports from Abuja (Nigeria).

The attack occurred on Sunday in Kurmin Wali, a community in the Kajuru area of Kaduna state, while services and a Mass were underway at the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA), a church belonging to the denomination Cherubim and Seraphim, and a Catholic church, according to Usman Danlami Stingo, a lawmaker representing the area at the state parliament. "As of yesterday, 177 people were missing, and 11 came back. So we have 168 still missing," he said. No group has taken responsibility. Such attacks are common in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, where multiple gangs and religious armed groups attack remote communities with limited security and government presence. The northern region of the country has been hit hardest. Attacks on churches have sparked allegations of the persecution of Christian by US President Donald Trump and some American lawmakers.

Imran denied access to legal aid

▸ Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan has been denied access to his legal counsels and kept in solitary confinement for the last three months, PTI reports from Lahore.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said that the "prolonged solitary confinement" is viewed under international law as harmful and potentially constituting cruel, inhuman. Khan, 73, has been incarcerated since August 2023, when he was arrested for the first time. Multiple cases have been registered against Khan after his government was toppled in April 2022. The military-backed Shehbaz Sharif government early last month had imposed a complete ban on Khan's all kinds of jail meetings following his statement against Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Actress Liz Hurley (left) arrives to attend the start of a trial against Associated Newspapers, publisher of the Daily Mail, in London on Monday. REUTERS

China factory fire kills four

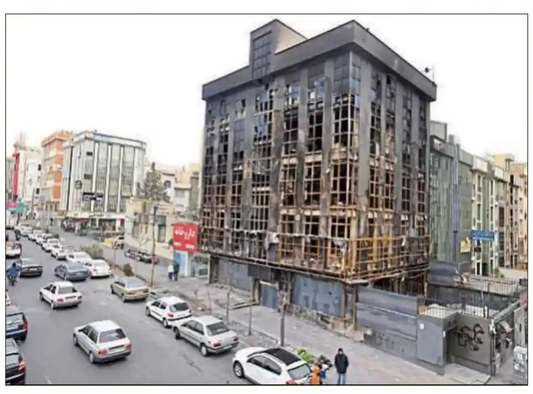
▸ Chinese police have detained those in charge of a steel factory in the Inner Mongolia region after an explosion killed four people and left 84 others hospitalised, AP/PTI reports from Beijing.

The death toll rose to four during the day on Monday as rescuers searched for the missing. State broadcaster CCTV said six more people remained unaccounted-for. The 3 pm blast at a Baogang United Steel plant in the city of Baotou on Sunday caused tremors in the surrounding area and sent a massive cloud of white smoke skyward. A pressurised storage tank designed to hold steam and high-temperature water exploded, city officials said. Baogang United Steel is a major state-owned company.

Hackers target Iranian state TV

▸ Hackers disrupted Iranian state television satellite transmissions to air footage supporting the country's exiled crown prince and calling on security forces to not "point your weapons at the people," footage online showed early Monday, AP/PTI reports from Dubai.

The hacking comes as the death toll in a crackdown by authorities that smothered the demonstrations reached at least 3,919 people killed, activists said. They fear the number will grow far higher as information leaks out of a country still gripped by the government's decision to shut down the internet. Meanwhile, tensions remain high between the United States and Iran over the crackdown after President Donald Trump drew two red lines for the Islamic Republic — the killing of peaceful protesters and Tehran conducting mass executions in the wake of the demonstrations.



People walk past a burnt out building destroyed during public protests in Tehran on Monday. AFP

Silver prices may spike 20% on the back of bullish global cues

Analysts predict surge beyond the Rs 3.6-lakh mark this year

HRITHIK KIRAN BAGADE
BENGALURU, DHNS

Silver prices are likely to go up over 20% in the next few months, as demand for the white metal is surging exponentially due to a strong investor and bullish global sentiment. The prices have gone up by 161% in 2025, and are currently ruling at Rs 3 lakh per kg mark.

"For the last five years, global silver demand has exceeded supply, creating consecutive deficits due to surging industrial use," Tata Mutual Fund said.

Explaining the sharp rise in silver prices, Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst – Commodities at HDFC Securities, said, "Silver has the combined status of industrial and precious metal, which makes it more attractive. Silver surged with strong industrial and investment demand, combined with steady supply levels, pushing the silver market into multiple years of deficit, and this trend will likely persist this year as well."

Going by the current trend, analysts expect the prices to surge beyond the Rs 3,60,000-mark

this year.

"Silver is also considered a precious metal, with factors like falling interest rates, mounting fiscal concerns, and broader economic uncertainty prompting investors to shift toward safe-haven and higher-yielding assets," he stressed.

The spectacular rally in silver is driven by powerful structural

> "Silver is also considered a precious metal, with factors like falling interest rates, mounting fiscal concerns, and broader economic uncertainty prompting investors to shift toward safe-haven and higher-yielding assets.
>
> **SAUMIL GANDHI**
> Senior Analyst – Commodities, HDFC Securities

and macroeconomic forces that continue to support the prices. The metal has been in a deep supply deficit for five consecutive years, with global inventories shrinking as industrial, manufacturing, and investment demand outpace output. This imbalance is expected to persist into 2026, reinforcing bullish momentum, Hareesh V, Head of Commodity Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Analysts also point to a recent supply squeeze in China, which has added to market concerns, especially as demand for silver in green energy, electric vehicles, and AI continues to rise sharply.

China's new restrictions on silver exports, effective January 1, 2026, have disproportionately affected smaller exporters and further restricted the flow of Chinese silver into global markets that are already grappling with tight supply conditions. At the same time, the US has formally designated silver as a critical mineral — a move that significantly alters market dynamics. In 2025, the global silver market faced a significant structural deficit, with demand exceeding supply by about 117.6 million ounces.

Experts caution against excessive exposure to silver over gold, warning that silver prices tend to correct more sharply during downturns. "Recently, there was a signal that silver is overbought, which means the ratio has gone up to 67, which is very high for the white metal. Ideally, it should be in the range of 61-62," said Naresh Chetan, Managing Director of Zaveri Brothers Diamonds & Gold.

The gold-silver ratio measures how many ounces of silver are required to purchase one ounce of gold and is commonly used by investors to assess relative valuation, market trends, and potential trading opportunities between the two metals.

Reiterating that silver appears overbought, Chetan said, "Being in the business of reading charts for over 40 years, I have now seen we are reaching an overbought position for silver, while gold might still have some space to go up."

However, he cautioned that silver prices may correct in 2026, falling faster than gold. "While the yellow metal would fall 5%, the white metal would fall 25%," he predicted.

By 2030, India likely to become 'upper middle-income' country

SBI report says per capita income may rise by $1,000 in 4 yrs

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India is likely to become an 'upper middle-income' country by 2030 with per capita income rising to over $4,000 from the current around $3,000, the State Bank of India (SBI) said in a research report on Monday.

As per the World Bank's classification, India is currently placed in the 'lower middle-income' group, which it achieved in 2007.

According to the SBI Research analysis, India's per capita income is likely to increase by $1,000 in the next four years. It took 10 years to increase from $1,000 to $2,000. The next $1,000 in the country's per capita was added in 7 years.

India took 60 years to transition to 'lower-middle income' in 2007 from a 'low-income country'. The country's per capita gross national income (GNI) increased from $90 in 1962 to $910 in 2007, a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 5.3%.

"India can and will transition to the upper middle-income country, which has the threshold per capita GNI of around $4,500, in the next few years (assuming average growth of GNI per capita of around 8.3%)," noted the report authored by SBI Group Chief Economic Advisor Soumya Kanti Ghosh.

The country's nominal gross domestic product (GDP) in dollar terms is required to grow an average 11.5% annually to achieve the $4,500 level by 2030. India's GDP grew by an average around 10% in the US dollar terms between 2003-04 and 2024-25.

SBI Research noted that India can achieve the high income country status by 2047 with an average annual growth of 7.5% in the per capita income provided the threshold level is not revised by the World Bank.

"If we consider the current per capita GNI threshold for high income country of $13,936 to be reached by 2047 (as per government's plan), India's per capita GNI has to grow by a CAGR of 7.5%. This seems achievable as India's per capita GNI has grown by a CAGR of 8.3% during the last 23 years (2001-2024)," it said.

However, the threshold level for a high income country is likely to change by then. If the threshold for a high income country gets changed to $18,000, then India's per capita GNI needs to grow by a CAGR of around 8.9% in the next 23 years, it added.

India is likely to become the third-largest economy by 2028 surpassing Germany. In terms of nominal GDP, India transitioned from the 14th rank in 1990 to the 10th rank in 2014 and further to the fourth rank in 2025.

IT union claims Wipro delays onboarding freshers

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Nascent Information Technology Employees Senate (NITES), which represents IT professionals, on Monday filed an official complaint with the Ministry of Labour and Employment against IT services firm Wipro's onboarding delays that affect over 250 freshers across multiple states.

In its complaint, Harpreet Singh Saluja, President, NITES, said these 250+ freshers were selected through campus hiring, issued Letters of Intent and in several cases even received confirmed onboarding emails with joining dates and locations.

"Despite this, Wipro failed to onboard them and has kept them waiting for 6-8 months without any written explanation, joining date, or formal rejection. Repeated follow-ups were met with silence or automated replies citing vague business requirements. During this period, the company has continued onboarding other candidates, leaving these selected students in uncertainty," he claimed.

The Letters of Intent issued by the company did not clearly or transparently disclose that onboarding could be delayed indefinitely at the company's discretion without any outer time limit, according to NITES' complaint.

More than 250 candidates have approached the union from multiple states, including Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and other regions.

During the company's Q3 earnings, Wipro said it is expecting to hire 7,500-8,000 freshers for this fiscal, down from its earlier target of 10,000. The company has hired only 400 freshers in the December quarter, and so far in the last three quarters of this fiscal, the company has hired close to 5,000 freshers.

The company's Chief Human Resource Officer Saurabh Govil said, "In the next quarter, we'll be looking at ramping up 2,000-2,500 people from the campuses. Our lateral hiring will continue, and it will be more project-based and skill-based," he said.

An email sent to Wipro regarding onboarding delay did not elicit any response.

IMF pegs FY27 GDP growth at 6.4%

Current fiscal growth revised up by 70 bps to 7.3%

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Monday raised India's economic growth projection for the current financial year by 70 basis points to 7.3%, citing better-than-expected performance in the first half.

In its latest World Economic Outlook update, the IMF also revised upward its projection on India's GDP growth for the financial year beginning 2026 to 6.4%, from its earlier estimate of 6.2%.

India's GDP grew by 8% in the first quarter of the current financial year. In its first advance estimate of GDP, the National Statistics Office (NSO) recently pegged the 2025-26 growth at 7.4%.

The IMF's projection for the current fiscal is slightly lower than the government's estimate. "In India, growth is revised upward by 0.7 percentage point to 7.3% for 2025 (fiscal FY26), reflecting the better-than-expected outturn in the third quarter of the year and strong momentum in the fourth quarter," the IMF said.

However, it noted that India's growth in the next two fiscals would be lower than the current one "as cyclical and temporary factors wane". For FY2027-28 too, the IMF has pegged India's GDP growth projection at 6.4%.

The IMF has also revised upward its projection on the global economy growth for 2026, to 3.3%, which is 20 basis points higher compared with its October forecast. The US and China are the major drivers of this upgrade in global growth. "Global economic growth continues to show notable resilience, despite significant US-led trade disruptions and heightened uncertainty," it said.

This surprising strength reflects a confluence of factors, including easing trade tensions, higher-than-expected fiscal stimulus, accommodative financial conditions, the agility of the private sector in mitigating trade disruptions and improved policy frameworks especially in emerging market economies, it said.

According to the IMF, a tech-driven boom will shake off tariff shocks on the global economy. "While manufacturing activity remains subdued, IT investment as a share of US economic output has surged to the highest level since 2001, providing a major boost to overall business investment and activity. Although this IT surge has been concentrated in the US, it is also generating positive spillovers globally, most notably to Asia's technology exports."

However, it flagged risks from the concentration of tech investments.

Moody's projects India growth at 7.3%

NEW DELHI, PTI: Moody's Ratings on Monday projected India to clock a 7.3% growth in the current fiscal, and said the strong economic expansion would support average household incomes and stimulate demand for insurance protection.

In its report on India's insurance sector, Moody's said the industry looks set to benefit from sustained premium growth on the back of robust economic expansion, increased digitisation, tax changes and a planned reform of the dominant state-owned insurance sector. The increase should improve the industry's currently weak profitability.

LTIMindtree Q3 net profit declines 10.5% to Rs 971 cr

BENGALURU, DHNS: IT services firm LTIMindtree on Monday reported a 10.5% decline in its consolidated net profit for the quarter ended December 2025, to Rs 970.6 crore, due to a one-time provision of Rs 590 crore towards the implementation of the new Labour Codes. The company had posted Rs 1,085.4 crore in the same period last year.

Revenue from operations in the third quarter stood at Rs 10,781 crore, an 11.6% increase, compared to Rs 9,661 crore in the same quarter last year. Its operating EBIT margin expanded by 230 bps y-o-y to 16.1%.

"Our strong Q3FY26 performance reflects the impact of our strategic AI pivot, continued success in large deals, and operational excellence, supported by our proactive efforts to build a more resilient and balanced portfolio," the company's Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Venu Lambu, said.

For the quarter ended December 31, 2025, the company's Operating EBIT stood at Rs 1,737.1 crore, a 5.4% increase sequentially.

The company has 746 active clients as of December 31, 2025, and its $20 million+ clients increased by 8 on a y-o-y basis. The firm added 1,511 employees in Q3, and its total headcount stood at 87,958. Its trailing 12-month attrition was at 13.8%.

Rupee falls 12 paise to close tad above all-time low

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee depreciated 12 paise to close at 90.90 against the US dollar on Monday, a tad above its record low closing level, weighed down by robust greenback demand from metal importers and persistent foreign fund outflows.

Forex traders said rising geopolitical uncertainty has increased risk aversion and kept emerging market currencies under pressure.

At the interbank forex, the rupee opened at 90.68 and slid past the crucial 91.01 against the greenback during the session. It finally settled 12 paise lower at 90.90 against the dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.29 per cent lower at 99.10.

Government of Karnataka
Executive Engineer,
RDW&S, Division, Mysore

Short Term Tender Notification No: 13/2025-26
Date: 16.01.2026

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka Items rate tenders under KW-3 Standard Bid documents (Two cover system) has been called for **Construction & repair of drinking water overhead tank and pipeline construction & repair works to be carried out in the villages of Nanjangud taluk falling under Varuna assembly constituency of Mysore district And Providing and Supplying Materials for Grey Water Management (Package 2 & 3) in Madapura gram panchayat, Madapura village, H D Kote taluk. (Estimate cost 100.00 Lakhs, 49.95 Lakhs, 25.41 Lakhs Respectively)** under the Head of Account: **2215/2024-25**. Tender is been invited as per Karnataka transparency Act G.O.No.FD9 PCL 2004 Dt. 06.08.2005 and as per recent amendments, Date of uploading Tender forms under e-procurement Dt: **16.01.2026 5.00PM** onwards, Last Date for submitting the filled Tender forms is **23.01.2026 upto 5:00PM**, Opening of Technical bid **27.01.2026, 5.30 PM** onwards, Opening of Financial bid after approval of Technical bid. Eligible Agencies can participate in the tender process and for e-procurement support contact e-procurement Tel. Phone No 080 – 22485867, 080-22485927. For more details log on to **https://kppp.Karnataka.gov.in** or contact the Officer under signed at office hours. Phone No.0821-2460 495. Tender Form Fees – As per e-procurement.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, RDW&S,Division,Mysore

DIPR/DDMYS/1528/KSMCA/862/2025-26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No. CEE/Tr(O)ZB/SEE(O)/AEE-3/F-306(3)/DBP/2025-26/9235-36 Dt: 19.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal only)

KPTCL invites bid against the enquiry **No:KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/TTK-19,(Call-2)** for the work "Erection of additional 1 No. MCVCB switchgear (Incomer + feeder + Annunciation panel) for 20MVA, 66/11kV Transformer-1 side at **66/11kV Tubgere sub-station**, Operation Division, Doddaballapura on **Total Turnkey Basis** including supply of all matching materials/equipments (excluding supply of 11kV switchgear), erection(including civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing & commissioning.''

The bids will be received through electronic tender mode only.The detailed notification regarding the subject enquiry in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging into **KPP Portal website www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **27.01.2026.** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer(Ele.), Transmission(Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru-560009.

ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.

ಸಂ.ದಾಮಪಾ:ಕಾಅ1:25–26ಟೆ44/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14–01–2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ

ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ನಂ:ದಾಮಪಾ:ಕಾಅ1.ಇ.ಟೆಂಡರ್:44:2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:02–01–2026 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ. ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾದ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳ ಮೂಲ ಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ (ಸಿ.ಎಂ.ಐ.ಡಿ.ಪಿ) ಅನುದಾನಡಿ–13 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು, 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿಧಿ. –02 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು, 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿಧಿ (ಮಳಿಗೆ ನಿಧಿ) –06 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು, : ಒಟ್ಟು 21 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ತಿದ್ದುಪಡಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು.

ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ.02, 03, 04, 18, 22, 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31ರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ :
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23–01–2026 ಸಮಯ :16.00
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 23–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.00

ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ.07, 09, 12ರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ: ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 22–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 16.00
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 22–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.00

ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ.10, 19, 21ರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ : ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 27–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 16.00
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 27–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.00

ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ.14, 20, 25, 28ರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ : ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 28–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 16.00
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 28–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.00

ವಾಸಾಇ/ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ/661/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

ಸಹಿ/–ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
1st Floor, Amruthhalli, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru - 560092
No: No.BNCC /AC/Adm/Tend/01/2025-26 Date: 19-01-2026

NOTIFICATION

Bengaluru North City Corporation invites Application from law graduates or newly turned advocates for the post of **"Legal Assistant"** in The office of The Head Of the Legal Cell

- Tenure Of the Post 11 Months
- **Rs.30,000/-** per month Honorarium
- Mode of selection through an interview

Application on plain paper with complete Bio-data and supporting documents addressed to the "Commissioner, Bengaluru North City Corporation 1st Floor, Amruthhalli, Bytarayanapura, Bengaluru-560092" duly superscribing on the cover as " Application for the post of **"Legal Assistant"** should reach on or before date: **31-01-2026**. Only application sent through post will be accpted.

Sd/- Deputy Commissioner (Admin) Bengaluru North City Corporation

KIDWAI MEMORIAL INSTITUTE OF ONCOLOGY,
Cancer Research & Training Centre
GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA AUTONOMOUS INSTITUTION (Regional Centre of Cancer Research & Treatment Member of International Union Against Cancer)
Dr. M.H. Marigowda Road, Bangalore-560029
Ph: +91 080-2656 0722/2656 0723, 080-6669 7999

No:KMIO/Acct/FD/491/2025-26 Date:19-01-2026

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION

Online Tenders are invited in Two Bid System for the following through GOK KPP Portal tender for Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology.

Sl No.	Tender No. & Date	Name of the Items
1	KMIO/Acct/FD/491/2025-26, Dt:19-01-2026 (Call 2)	e-Auction of Fixed Deposit (Estimated Budget: 29 Cr)
2	KMIO/SMS(1)/Tender/BMW/427/2025-26, Dt: 19-01-2026 (Call 3)	Management & Disposal of Bio-Medical waste generated in Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology (Estimated Cost: Rs.10.84Lakhs)
3	KMIO/Scrap/492/2025-26, Dt: 19-01-2026	Lifting of Scrap Material as is Where is basis at KMIO

The Bid Document will be available in online for **21-01-2026** to **28-01-2026**. Bidders can view and download the Bid Document from the Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Bids have to be submitted through e-Procurement Portal and e-procurement Portal fees. The last date and time of Receipt of Bid through e-Procurement Portal is **28-01-2026** till **4:00 P.M.** Tender Accepting Authority reserves the right to accept/reject/cancel the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

DIPR/SI/5100/2025-26

Sd/- Financial Advisor

Public Works Department
Chikkaballapur Division, Chikkaballapur.
No.:17/2025-26 Date: 14.01.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (I.F.T)

For Road/Building-Improvements/Construction/maint & Services- As per SBD KW1,2,4 and K/C-8 in two tender document system(Two Cover). on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka, as per KPPP Act 2000, the undersigned invite tenders for works in two cover system through KPP Protal from eligible contractors registered in PWD. Those interested in participating in the tender can submit the tenders from Date: 14.01.2026 to 21.01.2026 & 29.01.2026 up to 04:00 pm and from Date: 19.01.2026 to 27.01.2026, 03.02.2026 & 18.02.2026up to 04:00 pm. Further details may be obtained from the above office during hours on works days or from websites **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Chikkaballapur.
DIPR/CHIKKABALLAPUR/RO.375/KSMCA/2025-26

BANGALORE WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Special Division, R R Nagara Zone-1, No.301, 2nd Floor, Near BEML Complex, 3rd Satge, BEML Layout, Rajarajeshwari Nagara Bangalore.-560098.

No.BWCC/EE(SD)/RRNZ-1/TEND/02/2025-26 Date: 19.01.2026

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two Cover System) (Only through KPP Portal http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in only)

The Executive Engineer, Special Division, R R Nagara Zone-1, invites tenders from eligible bidders for the work detailed in table below. The tenderers may submit tenders for works given in the table through KPP portal of the Government of Karnataka **(viz https://Kppp.karnataka.gov.in).** The tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Instructions to Tenderers to qualify for award of the contract. Other details can be seen in the tender document.

Sl. No.	Name of the Service/EMD amount in Rs/Period of Service
1	Supply of Security Services at BBMP Building offices at Rajarajeshwarinagara Zone for 11 Months for the year 2025-26. EMD **: Rs. 2,98,500/-.** Period of Service : **11 Months.**

Calendar of Events:-
1. Downloading the Tender Document from : **29.01.2026 onwards.**
2. Last Date & Time for Tender Queries : **02.02.2026 up to 4.00PM.**
3. Last Date for Submission of Tender document **: 18.02.2026 up to 5.00PM. 4.** Opening of Technical Bid : **19.02.2026 at 5.30 PM. 5.** Opening of Financial Bid : **Will be Intimated to the Technically Qualified Bidders.**
In the event of the Specified Date of Tender Opening being declared a Holiday for the Employer, the Tenders will be opened at the Appointed Time and Location on the Next working Day.

Sd/- Executive Engineer Special Division,
R R Nagara Zone-1, Bengaluru West City Corporation.

Book reading: Are we losing this essential skill?

SAHANA PRASAD

"Read pages 20-30 in detail. Absorb the ideas, make notes and let's discuss next week!" I closed the class and could see many looking concerned. " Read? A book? Wouldn't a YouTube video suffice? Or, better still, ask GenAI to summarise those pages?"

The students' reactions were not just about laziness; they were a symptom of a fundamental shift in how we process the world. We have become a "summary-first" society. We want the result without the process. We want the muscle without the workout.

When a student asks for a YouTube video instead of a chapter, they are asking to be "fed" information rather than "hunting" for it. In a video or a bulleted list, the synthesis has already been done for you by someone else—or worse, by an algorithm. You are consuming a pre-digested meal. While efficient, this bypasses the

critical neural pathways that enable you to take disparate, difficult ideas and weave them into a coherent understanding of your own.

In an era of 15-second videos and AI summaries of text, the ability to sit with a single text for an hour is becoming extinct. When we read online, our brains are in "hunting" mode—looking for keywords and links. In a digital environment, your brain moves like a pinball: you read a sentence, click a hyperlink, check a notification, and skim a sidebar. This is nonlinear. Whereas "Linear thinking" is the ability to follow a single thread of thought from point A to point Z without the thread breaking. Deep reading in print or a dedicated e-reader forces the brain into "linear thinking"; by the time you reach the end of a chapter, you haven't just absorbed information—you have constructed a logical structure in your mind

It's not just about absorbing information; it's about the conversation you have with the author in your head. It not only helps build mental stamina but also helps focus when there are difficult tasks at work or school that last longer than those of your peers.

Consider the concluding line of The Great Gatsby: "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." Try reading it yourself. Do you feel the rhythmic, exhausting struggle? The invisible force against human will? Now, ask an AI to summarise it. It gives you the "gist," but does it give you the emotion? Skimming strips away the sophisticated vocabulary and subtle nuances that make an idea resonate.

This "shortcut" culture isn't limited to literature. Prof. Anirudh, a music teacher, laments that his students now prefer "Shorts" to learn swaras, rather than studying them in detail to understand how they are modified and used across different compositions. In music, as in reading, the beauty and the skill lie in the transitions—the "in-between" moments that a 15-second clip simply cannot capture. By chasing the highlight reel, students miss the craft's foundational soul.

Dr Deepthi Das, Professor and Associate Dean, School of Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), has a strong case for reading books." Although digital devices such as tablets and mobile phones are widely used for reading, physical books remain essential. They provide a distraction-free environment, unlike screens, which often lead readers to browse or multitask. The tactile experience of holding a book further enhances comprehension and supports deeper engagement with the content

Beyond the academic halls, this about-to-be-extinct skill is becoming a massive issue. In a corporate world drowning in surface-level communication, the person who can actually read a twenty-page technical brief without losing focus is the person who will lead. They will see the contradictions the AI missed and the strategic nuances the skimmers overlooked.

As Dr Deepthi Das suggests, the physical book is our last fortress against the fragmented, distracted mind. By choosing the page over the screen, we aren't just reading; we are reclaiming our ability to think for ourselves.

(The author is an academic)

Need for career guidance

Ali Khwaja explains how important it is to start guiding students early on to help them figure out career choices

A wise person once said, "We teach children how to walk, but we do not guide them in which direction to walk." Students are rigorously taught in a wide variety of subjects, but are not guided on the career most suitable for them or on how to select it appropriately.

With wider choices, changing norms and innumerable new universities offering specialised courses, students and parents get confused about what course to choose and how to choose. Many students progress far into a degree without knowing what comes next, while others invest significant time and money in courses without clear direction—all due to a lack of proper guidance.

Gallup's 2024 State of the Global Workplace report found that only 14% of Indian employees feel they are thriving, far below the global average of 34%—and hence, the immense potential of our younger generation is being wasted.

UN-sponsored studies in 2025 show that only about 10% of Indian students receive professional career guidance; most rely on family, peers, or trends, leading to misaligned choices and wasted potential.

Despite efforts by schools and the government, this gap remains wide. While some professional agencies in large cities offer quality guidance, they are too few and often unaffordable. Therefore, students, parents, and teachers must collaborate to provide accurate information, support sound decision-making, and ensure that human-led, individualised guidance cannot be replaced by AI.

Start early

Students in primary and middle school should be given information about all possible careers available to them. Every visit to a mall, hospital, bank, or museum can be an opportunity to learn about the various personnel working there. Introduce children to different professionals in the neighbourhood or their social circles, and have them talk about the work they do. The exposure should also include blue-collar workers, since, with the advent of AI, they are likely to be in greater demand and unlikely to become redundant.

Encourage children to ask questions and explore all aspects of each career. Make them think about how attracted they feel towards particular fields of work. Until a student completes Class 9, allow them to change their ambitions as many times as they wish. Taking an interest in a wide range of professions will ensure that the student will not regret missing out on something that could have been promising. Never kill the dreams of a child, even if they sound unreasonable, e.g. one who says he wants to become an astronaut, another who aspires to become a film hero, someone who desires to become a YouTube influencer. At this stage, let them keep visualising a great future to motivate them to work harder.

When a student enters Class 10, they need to plan which subjects they will take in Class 11 and Class 12. Hence, this is the time to start narrowing down. The method to be adopted should be: first, identify the most suitable long-term career for a specific candidate, or at least a cluster of careers they are most suited for, e.g. technology, life/health sciences, human behaviour, creativity and design, language-related, research or finance. List out the courses/degrees that would qualify the student to attain expertise in the chosen profession. Accordingly, the options to be taken for a smooth transition into those degree courses can be finalised.

After gathering all relevant information, begin identifying the student's characteristics and matching them to the listed careers. This includes subjects they are good at, personality traits, social and interpersonal skills, commercial acumen, concentration span, memory retention, general knowledge, kinesthetic abilities, and any unique talents beyond academics.

This should be done on an ongoing basis, taking into account the opinions of neutral and experienced people. Each trait of an individual connects to specific careers. This also helps identify the talents needed for the chosen career, but not very well developed in the candidate — hence, training and practice can be provided to sharpen those skills.

Keep abreast with changes in rules

When the time comes to prepare for higher studies or entrance exams, it is necessary to stay up to date on the rules and regulations, as well as any recent changes. For example, there was a time when students who had not studied science at the +2 level were allowed to become architects. Then the Council of Architecture changed the eligibility, and now only those who have studied Math and Physics can appear for the NATA entrance exam. Similarly, for the 2026 entry, the Karnataka Examination Authority has made it compulsory for aspirants of Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy to appear for NEET, unlike earlier.

Students should be made aware of various options within a career group, e.g., lateral entry into BE after a polytechnic diploma, alternatives to MBBS, such as AYUSH medicine courses, and paramedical courses. Candidates who find it difficult to get through the highly competitive NDA exam can opt to become Agni-veers in the military, continue with their studies beyond 12th, apply for commissioned officer selection, or opt out after four years and get preferential recruitment into paramilitary services. There are many such opportunities.

Career guidance from professionals may seem expensive. But a few socially minded institutions offer free or subsidised services. A one-time fee for Aptitude Assessment may be a small price to pay for a lifetime decision. However, care should be taken to ensure testing is holistic, with all aspects of the candidate considered, rather than relying solely on computerised psychometric tests that yield impersonal, vague results.

At least one or two teachers in every school should be trained to offer career guidance. There are a few private institutions that train teachers and others to gain this expertise, but they need to constantly update themselves on the latest changes and norms so they can guide accordingly.

Most students feel unsure about their future path and often choose courses or jobs under pressure or because they are popular, not because of aptitude. Therefore, each stakeholder has a role to play, and we should all rise to it.

(The author is an academic cousellor)

BULLETIN BOARD

Video internship
Enbake Consulting Private Limited is hiring video editing/making interns who can work from home. Students with knowledge of Adobe Illustrator, Final Cut Pro, Video Editing, and Video Making can apply by February 13. The stipend is Rs 8,000 / month. Apply at: https://tinyurl.com/7kbyrx3p.

Marketing internship
J&B Sweets is hiring a marketing intern who can work from home. Students with knowledge of data extraction, lead generation, market research, and social media marketing can apply by February 13. The stipend is Rs 2,500-15,000/month. Apply at: https://tinyurl.com/mtz7va6x.

Talent acquisition internship
Oben Electric Vehicles Private Limited is hiring talent acquisition interns in Bengaluru. Students with proficiency in spoken and written English, interviewing skills, MS Excel, MS Office, and resume screening can apply by February 13. The stipend is Rs 20,000-24,000/month. Apply at: https://tinyurl.com/337stt6r.

Internet of Things (IoT) internship
Bempu Health is hiring Internet of Things (IoT) interns in Bengaluru. Students with knowledge of Arduino, ARM Microcontroller, C Programming, C++, Embedded Systems, ESP32, Internet of Things (IoT), Python, and Raspberry Pi can apply by February 13. The stipend is Rs 15,000-20,000/month. Apply at: https://tinyurl.com/5hptpjm.

Want to be a leader? Choose challenge over comfort

GIREESH Y M

Motivating undergraduates to pursue challenging yet fulfilling careers has always been difficult. Many students, sitting in lectures, quietly wonder, "What am I doing with my life?" An on-campus survey found that over 60% feel pressured to choose a "safe" career — one with clear paths and abundant opportunities.

A "safe" career offers stability, but it may also compromise long-term happiness. In contrast, challenging careers often take longer to achieve, demand more effort, and pose greater risks—but they also deliver deeper fulfilment and purpose. Research shows that choosing the road less travelled not only creates a positive impact in the world but also benefits personal growth.

Challenging careers are not merely difficult jobs; they are lifelong journeys of learning, problem-solving, and contribution. They involve tackling complex issues, continuous professional growth, and often generate social or global benefits.

Examples include educational specialists who design personalised learning plans, environmental engineers who ensure access to clean water, community health nurses serving underserved areas, assistive technology developers empowering people with disabilities, and social entrepreneurs who bring essential services to neglected communities. Though demanding, these roles offer meaning beyond financial gain.

Despite their value, many students avoid such paths—a question that invites deeper reflection.

Through discussions with students, we have identified four fears:

- **Fear of failure:** "What if I'm not intelligent enough? What if I spend years attempting to succeed and still fail?" The education we receive teaches us that failure is a negative thing; however, in these professions, it shows what you can focus on next!
- **The lengthy road to holistic success:** "Too many years of schooling and

minimal salary in the beginning." Yes, the road is much longer than other options; however, as with building a home, laying a solid foundation for your career will benefit you throughout your life!
- **Ease versus stress in finding a 'job'** — "I want to take a job with less stress every day." Although 'easier' jobs may involve less daily stress, they are often boring, repetitive, and eventually leave many people feeling unfulfilled and/or empty!
- **Depression of belonging or pretending to be somebody we are not:** "Everyone else seems to have this confidence in their abilities. I don't feel like I am deserving of being part of this community

Stories of quiet bravery

Preeti, 21, from Bengaluru, is a civil engineering student who once came close to giving up her chosen field. Struggling with introductory physics and calculus, she began to doubt her ability to become an engineer. A turning point came when a professor reminded her that engineering is inherently challenging and that overcoming difficulties is part of the profession. Encouraged, Preeti joined an engineering club and worked with a small team to design a rainwater-harvesting system for a community garden. The project failed twice before finally succeeding on the third attempt.

Reflecting on the experience, Preeti says it transformed her approach to problem-solving. "I now know that there are certain issues I cannot resolve immediately, but I am committed to working towards a solution. Every tough class is giving me opportunities to improve how I tackle these problems," she explains.

Rajeshwari, 22, from Hyderabad, chose nursing because she wanted to help people, but her first shift in the emergency room was overwhelming. "I was really scared," she recalls. One night, a young boy suffering from severe asthma was brought in. Rajeshwari spoke to him gently, held his hand, and explained each step of his treatment. As his breathing eased, his mother thanked her. "The real challenge isn't just the medical part," she says. "It's being there for someone when they're afraid. That's why this work matters."

Bindu, 20, from Nagpur, is studying computer science alongside sociology. While many around her focused on building entertainment apps, she wanted her technical skills to serve a deeper purpose. Learning that several communities lack access to reliable technology, she began working on a simple app that connects food banks with volunteers. "The coding is really hard," she admits, "but it has a real purpose."

Building courage to pursue such meaningful yet demanding paths takes time and effort. However, it can begin with small, deliberate steps. Think of the following suggestions as a toolkit for building that courage.

- Reframe your failures as learning experiences with a simple notebook that lists what you learned from each experience, e.g., a bad grade or turning in work late.
- Shadow a successful professional in an industry you are interested in; ask your school's career services department or a teacher to help you find someone who works in a challenging field. Spend several hours observing what they do daily. You will also have a chance to see both the difficult and rewarding aspects of that profession.
- Break large dreams down into small steps so they do not seem so overwhelming; for example, "Become a doctor" might start with "Pass my next quiz" or "Volunteer two hours in a hospital each week." You will gain confidence as you accomplish small goals.
- Develop a group of friends that will provide support for your education; join clubs at your school (football team, engineering club, nursing group, teaching group, etc.), and you will have friends to study with and celebrate with during difficult times.
- Keep a picture or letter of who you are helping with your work, whether it's someone sick, a child, or an entire neighbourhood; put it in a visible location where you can see it every day to remind you of why you continue your education through difficult times.

The world is waiting for you to be bold. Leaders across industries increasingly say they value grit over perfect GPAs. As one technology firm owner puts it, "I value candidates who demonstrate hard work through leadership roles or perseverance in the face of setbacks." Similarly, a director at a large hospital notes, "We look for intelligent, empathetic individuals willing to confront adversity; they often become our strongest leaders."

College offers a rare and supportive space to explore who you are, experiment with new ideas, and learn from mistakes. You already possess curiosity, determination, and compassion. Take a deep breath, start with small steps, and aim high.

What's next? Attend the Embrace the Challenge workshops offered by your campus career services office. There, you can connect with professionals, build new skills, and begin shaping your own roadmap to success. Today is where your journey begins.

(The author is an academic)

Questions? Feedback? Suggestions? Send them to us at
dheducation@deccanherald.co.in

Teacher well-being and pupil achievement are linked: Study

A new study from The University of Manchester has found that happier teachers help create happier pupils — and better learning — as ten schools across the UK embrace a groundbreaking approach to well-being.

The research, led by Dr Alexandra Hennessey and Dr Sarah MacQuarrie from the Manchester Institute of Education, explored how the schools adopted the Well Schools framework — a national movement run by the Youth Sport Trust that puts well-being at the heart of education.

The Well Schools project, which began in 2020, has grown into a thriving community of more than 2,000 schools across the UK. This study focused on 10 schools that participated in a detailed evaluation of how the framework supports well-being among both staff and pupils.

Their findings, published in Frontiers in Education, show that when schools focus on the health, happiness and connectedness of both pupils and staff, classrooms become more positive, productive places to learn and teach.

The report highlights inspiring examples from schools that have introduced everything from daily "active learning" sessions and outdoor lessons to staff recognition schemes, mental health first-aid training, and after-school well-being clubs. These initiatives, tailored to each school's needs, are helping teachers feel valued and pupils feel more engaged.

One teacher told the research team, "If staff are happy and relaxed, the lessons they teach are better. You can feel the buzz in the building — it just feels different."

Schools involved ranged from small primaries to large secondaries and special schools across England, Scotland and Wales. Despite their differences, all shared a commitment to supporting well-being as part of their school culture—and saw real benefits in attendance, focus and morale.

"Children learn best when they feel safe, healthy and supported — and the same goes for teachers. The Well Schools approach shows that well-being isn't a luxury or an add-on — it's the foundation for great education," said Dr Hennessey.

The study found that well-being programs worked best when led by senior school leaders but shaped collaboratively by staff and pupils. Initiatives such as 'keep, tweak or ditch' reviews helped teachers cut unnecessary workload, while pupil well-being ambassadors and parent workshops extended the benefits beyond the classroom.

"This research highlights the power of schools working as communities — not just institutions that deliver lessons, but places that nurture people," added Dr MacQuarrie. "The schools we studied created a sense of belonging, where staff and pupils alike feel heard and supported."

Dr Hennessey concluded, "Well-being and learning go hand in hand. Schools that invest in the health and happiness of their staff and students aren't just improving education—they're shaping stronger, kinder communities."

- PHYS.ORG

Likith, Samarth tons hand CC XI the advantage

BENGALURU, DHNS: P Likith Reddy (183) and Samarth Suresh (129) scored big centuries as Combined City XI took a big lead of 263 in the first innings against Bangalore Zone in a drawn match at the KSCA U-14 Inter-Zonal Tournament.

The duo took CC XI to 448/6 in 90 overs while Bangalore were 185 all out in response with Sriganesh M (3/43) and Ibrahim Khan (3/17) doing the damage.

CC XI finished their second innings at 111/7 in 26 overs.

LOCAL CRICKET

Brief scores: Combined City XI: 448/6 in 90.0 overs (P Lithik Reddy 183, Samarth Suresh 129, Krishna 35, Hrithvik Shetty 32, Daiwik M 43 n.o., Amey 2-59, Aarya Raj 2-95] & 111/7 in 26 overs (Krishna 47 n.o., Amey 3-22) drew with Bangalore Zone: 185 all out in 69.2 overs (Akarsh M Appinakatte 80, Krishav Karthik 28, Ibrahim Khan 3-17, Krishna 2-50, Sriganesh M 3-43, Jashith BS 2-27). Combined City XI: 3 points. **Bangalore Zone:** 1 pt.
President's XI: 339 all out in 83.2 overs (Prabhav Pydah 86, Ryan Tomar 81, Sangeeta Rao Sashang 57, M Neeraj 50; Samrat Aditya P 3-68, Syed Hammad Ulla 4-44) & 47/2 in 13 overs drew with Vice President's XI : 299/6 in 90 overs (Athreya Bhat 168 n.o., Vyom Naidu 36, Samrat Aditya P 56; Parinith K 2-42). **President's XI:** 3. **Vice President's XI:** 1 pt.
Shivamogga Zone: 222/9 in 90 overs (Yuvaraj N 61, Utsav Gowda DS 32, Rathan P 26; Akhilesh Pradhan 4-30, Rahul Jena 2-38, Jeet D 3-32) & 186/1 in 30 overs (Shourya K 48, Yuvaraj N 103 n.o., Adarsh Hitthadi VH 26 n.o.) drew with Bangalore City XI: 339/5 in 90 overs (Ahaan Dash 34, Sachith Shetty 127, Ishaanth Y 25, Ashwwath Nagarajan 41, Hannan Zaki Ahmad 52, Lalithesh R 44 n.o., Deghul MN 2-58). **Bangalore City XI:** 3 and **Shivamogga Zone:** 1.
Tumkur Zone: 158 all out in 61.3 overs (Aayat Rahim Khan 38, Mohammed Yaseen 59, Alok M Japannavar 2-26, Atharv Karadi 4-15, Vivaan Bhusad 3-26) & 100/7 in 31 overs (Mohammed Yaseen 45 n.o., Vivaan Bhusad 3-21) drew with Dharwad Zone: 372 for 2 in 90 overs (Ajay A Lamani 76, Akshay Baligar 167 n.o., Yesh Thakur 102 n.o.). **Dharwad Zone:** 3. **Tumkur Zone:** 1.
Raichur Zone: 325 all out in 90 overs (Tejas 134, Athmik Pujari 34, Rathod Sairam 49, Benaka R Gowda 3-64, Swaroop H 3-45, Sachin Raj S 2-37) & 149/7 in 35 overs (Tejas 63, Pavandeep R Bharadakane 50, Guruprasad G 5-37, Sashreek SA 2-11) drew with Mysore Zone: 161 all out in 57 overs (Nikhil G Chethan 30, Shivakumar NP 72, Syed Mohammad Saquib 4-24, Vivekanand Bhovi 3-23). **Raichur Zone:** 3. **Mysore Zone:** 1.
Secretary's XI: 134 all out in 67.2 overs (K Hrithik Polin 26, Vishist PJ 31, Tanish Bennuri 25 n.o., Gowrinandan P Kotian 2-29, Manvith D 5-27) & 169/4 in 43 overs (K Hrithik Polin 36, Naksh CM 102 n.o., Lohan Manohar A 2-27) drew with Mangalore Zone: 116 all out in 82 overs (Gowrinandan P Kotian 26, Vishist PJ 2-26, Gaurav V 3-11). **Secretary's XI:** 3. **Mangalore Zone:** 1.

All-round Monish guides Triveni Memorial into quarters

BENGALURU, DHNS: A fine all-round performance from Monish P and a three-for from Bhuvan Shekhar Gowda helped Triveni Memorial Educational Trust to a nervy four-wicket win over Vidyaniketan Public School in the pre-quarterfinals of the KSCA U-16 Schools' II Division tournament for the KM Ramprasad Shield here.

Batting first, Vidyaniketan Public School were bowled out cheaply for 85 in 24.5 overs, with Monish P returning with a 5/21. He was ably supported by Bhuvan (3/32).

Chasing 86 for victory, Triveni Memorial Educational Trust lost six wickets in 17.3 overs, but Monish (32) and Bhuvan Tejas N (24) guided them home.

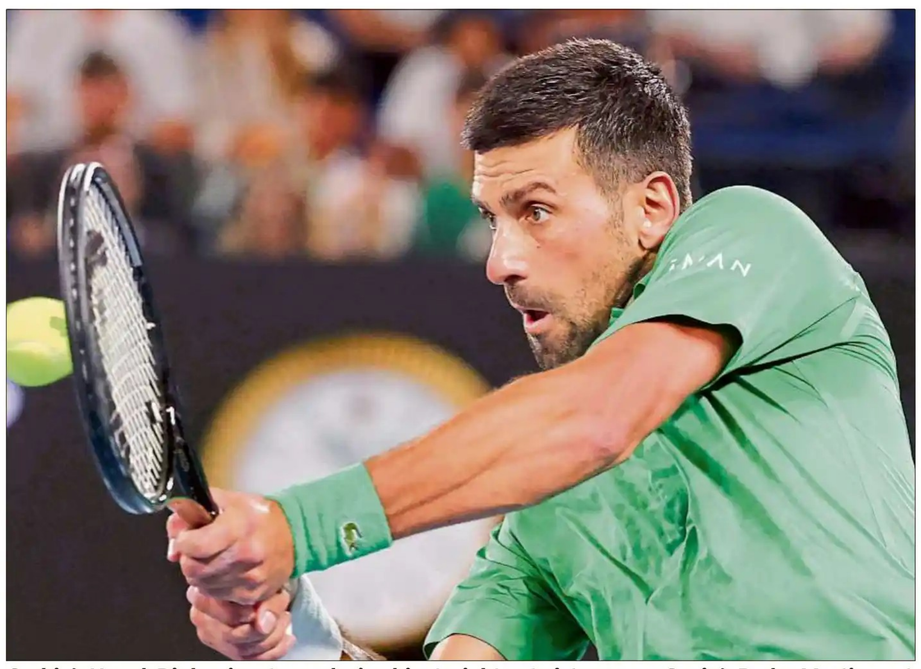
Brief scores: Vidyaniketan Public School, B – 56: 85 all out in 24.2 overs (Daksh M Unni 41; Monish P 5-21, Bhuvan Shekhar Gowda 3-32) lt to Triveni Memorial Educational Trust: 87/6 in 17.3 overs (Monish P 32; V Sumukha 3-31, Preetham Nanda Kumar 2-30).
St Paul's English School: 94 all out in 25.3 overs (Vishal Reddy SV 2-17, Usman Shareef 4-13, Arnav Rajiv VP 3-17) lt to Presidency School, RT Nagar: 97/5 in 19 overs (Rushil S 29, Hiranmayi P 5-49).
Sri Kumaran Public School, ICSE B – 62: 71 all out in 19.4 overs (Thaman Sai M 2-9, Dhruv Nambiar 3-11) lt to Frank Anthony Public School: 72/1 in 8 overs (Rishi Harivatsa S 30 n.o.).
Kensri School & College: 205 all out in 32.5 overs (Pranad Satyanarain 35, Neil Santosh Honnagudi 31, Bhofinn Sanjeeva Reddy 44; Dhanush Varanashi 6-73, Vismay N Murthy 2/44) bt Carmel School, B – 70: 156 all out in 29.1 overs (Dhruvitha Mithyantha 36; Dhruvesh 4-51, Shreyas S Gowda 3-13).
The Cathedral High School: 136 all out in 44 overs (Naitik Bhardwaj 39, Kaushik Somashekhar 26 n.o., Nakul R Sagar 3-18, S Lavith Nischal 2-28, Dhruv Acharya H 2-19, Chandan HM 2-18) lt to School Vivekananda: 139 for 1 in 18.1 overs (Nakul R Sagar 53 n.o., Dhruv Acharya H 47 n.o.).
Vidyaniketan School: 83 for all out in 30.1 overs (Nihal S Kukreja 38; Kodatala Sai Shravan Reddy 2-10, Harshith Babu Bommineni 2-7) lt to Sri Sri Ravishankar Vidyamandir, East: 86/1 in 8.1 overs (Swastik Ekhe 28 n.o., Gokul Sai Shashank Sunkara 38 n.o.).
Florence Public School: 64 all out in 18.4 overs (Yaeesh Rahaman 3/4, Yashas Reddi Bongu 5-6) lt to BGS National Public School: 66/1 in 6.4 overs (Abhinav SS 28 n.o.).

TENNIS AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Djokovic starts strong

Swiatek, Gauff stroll into second round; Medvedev works hard against De Jong

MELBOURNE, AFP



Serbia's Novak Djokovic returns during his straight-set victory over Spain's Pedro Martinez at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Monday. AFP

Novak Djokovic began his latest bid for a record 25th Grand Slam crown with an emphatic straight-sets victory on Monday as fellow Australian Open title contenders Iga Swiatek and Coco Gauff also won but with less sparkle.

Three-time finalist Daniil Medvedev stayed alive, as did 40-year-old Stan Wawrinka, who rolled back the clock to reach the second round in his tournament farewell.

Serbian great Djokovic, 38, tamed Spain's 71st-ranked Pedro Martinez 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 on Rod Laver Arena, a court where he has won a record 10 Australian Open crowns. The world No. 4 owns 24 major titles, equal for the most ever with Australia's Margaret Court, but a 25th has remained agonisingly out of reach.

His last came at the 2023 US Open with Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz sharing all eight since then.

"What can I say? I like the sound of it. Centurion is pretty nice," he said after his 100th victory at the Australian Open.

"I always give my best whenever I'm on the court. Obviously, history-making is a great motivation, and particularly in the last 5-10 years of my career."

The 2014 champion Wawrinka lived to fight another day with a gutsy four-set victory.

The three-time major winner is playing his last season before retiring and gave his all to down Serbia's Laslo Djere 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4) in front of a crowd willing him to victory.

"The passion is still intact. But I'm not young any more, so I need to be careful also," said the Swiss warhorse, who made his Australian Open debut in 2006.

Medvedev, runner-up in 2021, 2022 and 2024, warmed up for Melbourne with victory in Brisbane and ground to a 7-5, 6-2, 7-6 (7/2) opening round win over Dutchman Jesper de Jong.

The famously feisty Russian said he was trying to be more "positive" on court.

"So far I'm doing it well," he said.

Sixth seed Alex de Minaur, the big home hope, was also a straight-sets winner on another hot day where temperatures reached about 30C and record crowds of more than 100,000 faced long queues to get into Melbourne Park.

The tournament is over, however, for seventh seed Felix Auger-Aliassime, who retired from his match with cramp.

Auger-Aliassime won the opening set 6-3 against Nuno Borges but then lost the next two before calling time.

"I want to be on the court competing with my opponent. I don't want to be just standing there like a punching bag," he said.

The same fate befell tearful compatriot Marina Stakusic, who was taken off in a wheelchair when she cramped up against home player Priscilla Hon.

Day 2 results

Men's singles (I round, prefix denotes seeding): 4-Novak Djokovic (SRB) bt Pedro Martinez (ESP) 6-3, 6-2, 6-2; 19-Tommy Paul (USA) bt Aleksandar Kovacevic (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-3; 14-Alejandro Davidovich Fokina (ESP) bt Filip Misolic (AUT) 6-2, 6-3, 6-3; Hamad Medjedovic (Srb) bt Mariano Navone (Arg) 6-2, 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 6-2; 6-Alex De Minaur (Aus) bt Mackenzie McDonald (USA) 6-2, 6-2, 6-3; 13-Andrey Rublev (Rus) bt Matteo Arnaldi (Ita) 6-4, 6-2, 6-3; 11-Daniil Medvedev (Rus) bt Jesper de Jong (Ned) 7-5, 6-2, 7-6 (7/2); Quentin Halys (Fra) bt Alejandro Tabilo (Chi) 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (7/2); Kamil Majchrzak (Pol) bt Jacob Fearnley (Bri) 7-6 (7/2), 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (7/3); 25-Fabian Marozsan (Hun) bt 24-Arthur Rinderknech (Fra) 6-3, 6-4, 6-7 (2/7), 6-4; 25-Learner Tien (USA) bt Marcos Giron (USA) 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 3-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-2; Alexander Shevchenko (Kaz) bt Elias Ymer (Swe) 3-6, 7-5, 6-4, 6-1; Jordan Thompson (Aus) bt Juan Manuel Cerundolo (Arg) 6-7 (3/7), 7-5, 6-1, 6-1; Nuno Borges (Por) bt 7-Felix Auger-Aliassime (Can) 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 0-0 ret; Stanislas Wawrinka (Sui) bt Laslo Djere (Srb) 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7/4); Botic van de Zandschulp (Ned) bt 27-Brandon Nakashima (USA) 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (7/1), 7-6 (7/3); Shang Juncheng (Chn) bt Roberto Bautista (Esp) 6-4, 6-7 (2/7), 6-4, 6-0; Rinky Hijikata (Aus) bt Adrian Mannarino (Fra) 6-3, 6-3, 6-1; 21-Denis Shapovalov (Can) bt Bu Yunchaokete (Chn) 6-3, 7-6 (7/3), 6-1.
Women's singles: 17-Victoria Mboko (Can) bt Emerson Jones (Aus) 6-4, 6-1; 14-Clara Tauson (Den) bt Dalma Galfi (Hun) 6-3, 6-3; Anna Bondár (Hun) bt Elizabeth Mandlik (USA) 6-0, 6-4; 29-Iva Jovic (USA) bt Katie Volynets (USA) 6-2, 6-3; Priscilla Hon (Aus) bt Marina Stakusic (Can) 1-6, 6-4, 5-3 ret; Magdalena Frech (Pol) bt Veronika Erjavec (Slo) 6-1, 6-1; 3-Coco Gauff (USA) bt Kamilla Rakhimova (Uzb) 6-2, 6-3; Storm Hunter (Aus) bt Jessica Bouzas Maneiro (Esp) 6-4, 6-4; 19-Karolina Muchova (Cze) bt Jaqueline Cristian (Rom) 6-3, 7-6 (8/6); Alycia Parks (USA) bt Alexandra Eala (Phi) 0-6, 6-3, 6-2; Magda Linette (Pol) bt 15-Emma Navarro (USA) 3-6, 6-3, 6-3; 23-Diana Shnaider (Rus) bt Barbora Krejcikova (Cze) 2-6, 6-3, 6-3; Ajla Tomljanovic (Aus) bt Yuliia Starodubtseva (Ukr) 4-6, 7-6 (7/3), 6-1; 8-Mirra Andreeva (Rus) bt Donna Vekic (Cro) 4-6, 6-3, 6-0; 6-Jessica Pegula (USA) bt Anastasia Zakharova (Rus) 6-2, 6-1; McCartney Kessler (USA) bt Emiliana Arango (Col) 6-3, 6-2; Oksana Selekhmeteva (Rus) bt Ella Seidel (Ger) 6-3, 3-6, 6-0; 25-Paula Badosa (Esp) bt Zarina Diyas (Kaz) 6-2, 6-4; 13-Linda Noskova (Cze) bt Darja Semenistaja (Lat) 6-3, 6-0; Peyton Stearns (USA) bt 27-Sofia Kenin (USA) 6-3, 6-2; Petra Marcinko (Cro) bt Tatjana Maria (Ger) 6-3, 7-5; 4-Amanda Anisimova (USA) bt Simona Waltert (Sui) 6-3, 6-2; 21-Elise Mertens (Bel) bt Lanlana Tararudee (Tha) 7-5, 6-1; Moyuka Uchijima (Jpn) bt Solana Sierra (Arg) 6-3, 6-1; Marie Bouzkova (Cze) bt Renata Zarazua (Mex) 6-2, 7-5; 2-Iga Swiatek (Pol) bt Yuan Yue (Chn) 7-6 (7/5), 6-3.

Managing egos key as Real Madrid host Monaco

Arteta's Arsenal face Inter; Spurs meet Dortmund

MADRID, AFP

It already seems clear Real Madrid coach Alvaro Arbeloa believes success with the record 15-time European champions will only come with the careful management of egos at the club.

Los Blancos host Monaco on Tuesday in the Champions League as they bid to consolidate their position in the top eight of the league phase and put a turbulent spell behind them.

The Spanish Super Cup defeat by Barcelona in Xabi Alonso's last game at the helm and Arbeloa's debut Copa del Rey humiliation shook the club, with fans exhibiting their feelings on Saturday as they whistled their own players.

Madrid beat Levante 2-0 in La Liga but there was an immense show of dissent, with Arbeloa and star players Vinicius Junior and Jude Bellingham notably in the firing line.

Arbeloa's predecessor Alonso's downfall started when, despite beating Barcelona in the Clasico in October, he substituted Vinicius and the Brazilian responded furiously.

Alonso also upset Fede Valverde by playing him at out of position and rotated Jude Bellingham, until eventually the pressure on him from within the dressing room told.

Arbeloa's approach seems to be to lavish the club's most talented players with the kind of affection shown by Carlo Ancelotti and Zinedine Zidane during their successful stints at the club.

Inter in North London

Of the teams in pole position to ensure progression on matchday seven, Serie A leaders Inter face the toughest task as they must bounce back from defeat last time out against Liverpool when they take on the only team with a 100 percent record so far, Arsenal.

However, Cristian Chivu's side can count on no favours from Arsenal at the San Siro on Tuesday as the Premier League leaders will be desperate to sew up a top-eight finish ahead of the final round of league phase fixtures on January 28.

Fixtures: Almaty vs Brugge (9 pm), Bodo vs Man City (11:15 pm), Olympiacos vs Leverkusen, Sporting CP vs PSG, Villareal vs Ajax, Inter vs Arsenal, Real Madrid vs Monaco, Tottenham vs Dortmund (1:30 am).

Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham (left) has been struggling for form and has scored just once in his last 11 games. AFP

Sociedad snap Barca's winning streak

SAN SEBASTIAN (SPAIN), AFP: Real Sociedad damaged Barcelona's title defence ambitions as Goncalo Guedes gave them a surprise 2-1 La Liga victory on Sunday as Hansi Flick's side fell to a first defeat in 12 matches.

The Catalan giants, who hit the woodwork four times and had two goals disallowed, now only lead rivals Real Madrid by a single point at the top of the table after Alvaro Arbeloa's side beat Levante on Saturday.

Hosts Real Sociedad, now unbeaten in four games under new American coach Pellegrino Matarazzo, had Carlos Soler sent off late on but managed to hold on to triumph and climb up to eighth.

In a frantic start to a compelling game at the rainy Reale Arena, both teams had goals ruled out.

Results: Real Sociedad: 2 (Oyarzabal 32nd, Guedes 71st) bt Barcelona: 1 (Rashford 70th). Celta Vigo: 3 (Carreira 40th, Zaragoza 54th pen, Rueda 79th) bt Rayo Vallecano: 0.

Villa title hopes jolted by Everton

LONDON, AFP: Aston Villa's Premier League title challenge suffered a huge blow in a 1-0 defeat against Everton late on Sunday night.

Unai Emery's side could have closed to within four points of leaders Arsenal if they had beaten Everton at Villa Park. But they wasted the chance to put pressure on the Gunners with a limp performance that was punished by Thierno Barry's second-half winner.

After Arsenal's goalless draw at Nottingham Forest on Saturday, Mikel Arteta's men are seven points clear of third-placed Villa.

Emery's men lacked a cutting edge and they paid the price in the 59th minute.

Result: Aston Villa: 0 lt to Everton: 1 (Thierno Barry 59th).

Inaugural MAHETHON in city on January 25

BENGALURU, DHNS

Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), a deemed-to-be university, will host the first-ever MAHETHON, powered by Axis Bank. Branded as "Bengaluru's biggest running festival," this event will take place on January 25.

The run will start and finish at the MAHE Bengaluru Campus in Yelahanka with an aim to bring together fitness, sustainability and community spirit. The event is open to runners of all levels, from seasoned athletes to first-time participants.

Manipal Academy of Higher Education will host the first-ever MAHETHON on January 25.

RACE CATEGORIES

- **Half Marathon (21.1K):** The flagship race for endurance runners.
- 10K Run & 10K Forces Run: Open to the general public and armed/police forces.
- **5K Run: Ideal for fitness enthusiasts.**
- 3K Fun Run: Designed for children and beginners to enjoy running.
- **For registration, visit https://www.mahethon.in**

Celebrating the theme "Run Green. Breathe Free" and the tagline "Bengaluru Runs for Earth," the run showcases the campus' green initiatives, including biodiversity conservation and sustainable mobility, while encouraging participants to embrace healthier, eco-friendly lifestyles.

Madhu Veeraraghavan, Pro Vice-Chancellor of MLHS, MAHE Manipal said, "MAHETHON 2026 is more than a sporting event; it is a movement that reflects our collective spirit of resilience and progress."

MAHE, Manipal, will host the 8th edition of the Manipal Marathon -- recognised as one of India's largest student-organised community fitness events -- on February 8 at KMC Greens, Manipal.

Saina confirms retirement from competitive badminton

NEW DELHI, PTI: Trailblazer Indian shuttler Saina Nehwal, who has been out of action for the last two years due to a chronic knee condition, has confirmed her retirement from competitive badminton, saying her body could no longer cope with the physical demands of elite sport.

The 2012 London Olympic bronze medallist last played a competitive match at the Singapore Open in 2023 but did not formally announce her retirement at the time.

"I had stopped playing two years back. I actually felt that I entered the sport on my own terms and left on my own terms, so there was no need to announce it," Saina said on a podcast.

"If you are not capable of playing anymore, that's it. It's fine."

The former world No. 1 said the decision was forced by a severe degeneration of her knee, which made sustained high-intensity training impossible.

The Olympic medallist also reiterated that she did not see the need for a formal retirement announcement.

Senegal lift African Cup amid controversy

RABAT (MOROCCO), AFP: Senegal won the Africa Cup of Nations as Pape Gueye's extra-time winner sunk hosts Morocco 1-0 after a chaotic final that saw the eventual champions storm off the pitch late in the game.

Brahim Diaz could have won the trophy for Morocco with a controversial spot-kick in the 24th minute of added time at the end of normal time as ugly scenes broke out in the stands. However, Senegal goalkeeper Edouard Mendy easily saved the weak attempted 'Panenka' chip by the Real Madrid winger who was clearly distracted by the long delay that followed the penalty award.

The game then went to extra time, and Gueye's brilliant 94th-minute strike handed them the title.

FIFA condemns

FIFA president Gianni Infantino condemned "some Senegal players" for the "unacceptable scenes".

"We strongly condemn the behaviour of some 'supporters' as well as some Senegalese players and technical staff members," Infantino said.

Senegal players celebrate with the AFCON trophy after defeating hosts Morocco 1-0 in the extra time of the final in Rabat on Sunday. AP/PTI

NAGARJUNA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY
An Autonomous Institution Under VTU
Mudugurki, Venkatagiri Kote Post, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru, Karnataka

TENDER NOTICE

Tender notification for establishment of AICTE IDEA LAB Nagarjuna College Of Engineering and Technology invites sealed/online tenders from reputed vendors to submit quotations for the supply, installation & commissioning of equipment, tools and consumables under the AICTE IDEA Lab grant from reputed vendors. Last Date: 10-02-2026 upto 5.00 PM.

Further Details
www.ncet.co.in/idea-lab/idea_lab_tender_notice.pdf
Email: idealab@ncetmail.com
Ph. No. : 9986957022

Sd/- **Principal / Chief Mentor**

S.NIJALINGAPPA SUGAR INSTITUTE, BELAGAVI
C.T.S.No.4125/1B, Ganeshpur Road, Laxmi Tek, Belagavi-590 009 (Karnataka)
(O) : 0831- 2472482, Fax : 0831-2472464. Email: snsibgm@yahoo.com

RE-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Sub: **Tender no. SNSI/2025-26/IND0004/Call-2 dated 19.01.2026 for Supply, installation, commissioning of Various equipments at S. Nijalingappa Sugar Institute, Belagavi is floated**

1. The Contractors are invited for Supply, installation, commissioning of Various equipments viz., Automatic Digital Polarimeter and Spectophotometer at S.Nijalingappa Sugar Institute, Belagavi
2. The details for Production of Sugar Technology laboratory at S.Nijalingappa Sugar Institute, Belagavi and requirements can be viewed in **SNSI/2025-26/IND0004/Call-2** from e-procurement portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**
3. The last date for receipt of the tender documents in the e-procurement portal is on **31.01.2026** upto **17.30 hrs.**

Date:19.01.2026 Sd/- Director

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ
ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕಾಪಾಅ/ಪಂರಾಇಂ/ವಿಯಾ/ಸಿಎಮ್ಐಡಿಪಿ/ತಾಸ/2025–26/1696 ದಿನಾಂಕ:17.01.2026

ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತ ಟೆಂಡರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ) KW-1 & 3(ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ)

1) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ.: (1) ಸುರಪೂರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಹಸನಾಪುರ ದಿಂದ ರತ್ತಾಳ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸೇತುವೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22816 CAT-2A Bidder Only (2) ಸುರಪೂರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಮಲ್ಲಿಭಾವಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಿಂದ ಅಮ್ಮಾಪುರ (ವ್ಹಾಯ ಬೈಲ ಹನುಮಪ್ಪ ದೇವಸ್ಥಾನ) ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22814 General (3) ಹುಣಸಗಿ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಹೊಂಬಳಕಲ್ ಬಲಶೆಟ್ಟಿಹಾಳ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಹಳೆಯ ಮಾರ್ಗಕ್ಕೆ ಸೇತುವೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22817 General (4) ಶಹಾಪೂರ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಮರಕಲ ಕೊಳ್ಳೂರ ದಿಂದ ತಾಲೂಕ ಗಡಿವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22435 General (5) ವಡಗೇರಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಕುರಕುಂದಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಿಂದ ಅನಸೂರು ಹೋಗುವ ಕಿ.ಮೀ. 2.00 ರಿಂದ 3.00 ಕಿ.ಮೀ ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ಸುಧಾರಣೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22206 CAT-2A Bidders Only (6) ವಡಗೇರಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಕುರಕುಂದಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಿಂದ ಅನಸೂರು ಹೋಗುವ ಕಿ.ಮೀ. 3.00 ರಿಂದ 4.00 ಕಿ.ಮೀ ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ಸುಧಾರಣೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22218 CAT-2A Bidders Only (7) ವಡಗೇರಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಕುರಕುಂದಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಿಂದ ಅನಸೂರು ಹೋಗುವ ಕಿ.ಮೀ. 4.00 ರಿಂದ 5.00 ಕಿ.ಮೀ ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ಸುಧಾರಣೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22307 SC Bidders Only (8) ವಡಗೇರಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಕುರಕುಂದಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಿಂದ ಅನಸೂರು ಹೋಗುವ ಕಿ.ಮೀ. 5.00 ರಿಂದ 6.00 ಕಿ.ಮೀ ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ಸುಧಾರಣೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT 22393 SC Bidders Only. (9) ವಡಗೇರಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಕುರಕುಂದಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಿಂದ ಅನಸೂರು ಹೋಗುವ ಕಿ.ಮೀ. 6.00 ರಿಂದ 7.00 ಕಿ.ಮೀ ವರೆಗೆ ರಸ್ತೆ ಸುಧಾರಣೆ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22396 General (10) ವಡಗೇರಾ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಹಂಚಿನಾಳ ಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿ.ಸಿ. ರಸ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚರಂಡಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ. RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT22433General 2) **ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ:** 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಯವರ ಮೂಲಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಯೋಜನೆ ಮತ್ತು 2024–25ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ 5054 ಮಳೆ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಯೋಜನೆ **3) ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಿಟ್ಟ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ:** ಕನಿಷ್ಠ 20.00 ಮತ್ತು ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ. 100.00 ಲಕ್ಷ **4) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ದರ್ಜೆ:** 4ನೇ ದರ್ಜೆ ಮತ್ತು 3ನೇ ದರ್ಜೆ ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು **5) ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ:** 19.01.2026 ರಿಂದ 29.01.2026 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ **6) ಟೆಂಡರ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಬೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ:** ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಮೂದಿಸಿದಂತೆ (ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲಾ) **7) ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ:** 29.01.2026 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ **8) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ತಾಂತ್ರೀಕ:** 31.01.2026 ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಗೆ 11:00 ನಂತರ **9) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ:** 05.02.2026 ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಗೆ 11:00 ನಂತರ **10) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ವಿಳಾಸ (ಕಛೇರಿ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ):** ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ. **11) ಅಂತರಜಾಲ ತಾಣದ ವಿಳಾಸ:** https://kppp.karnataka. gov.in

ಸೂಚನೆ :– ಟೆಂಡರರಿಗೆಸಂಬಂದಿಸಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು (ರಜಾದಿನಗಳು ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ).

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರು,
ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ,
ಯಾದಗಿರ.

ಪಾ.ಸಾ.ಸಂ.ಇ/ಯಾದಗಿರ/481/ಕೆ.ಎಸ್.ಎಂ.ಪಿ.&ಎ/2025–26

D Gukesh

Gukesh draws with Arjun in Round 3

WIJK AAN ZEE (NETHERLANDS), PTI: Top seed Arjun Erigaisi could not get past the defenses of world champion D Gukesh as the two Indians agreed to a draw in the third round of the Tata Steel Masters here on Monday.

Having qualified to the candidates tournament, Matthias Bluebaum scored his first victory in the event, defeating compatriot Vincent Keymer. He joined the leaders' pack on two points out of a possible three.

Amongst other Indians in the fray, Aravindh Chithambaram played out another draw with Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan while R Praggnanandhaa was looking good to keep his two losses behind and going to score his first victory in the 14-player 13-round event over Thai Dai Van Nguyen of Czech Republic.

With 10 rounds still to come in the first super tournament of the year, Arjun, Abdusattorov and Hans Niemann were joined by Bluebaum in the lead on two points out of a possible three.

It seems that the battle is heating up at the bottom of the table wherein the likes of Praggnanandhaa, Anish Giri and Gukesh are raring to have a go.

CRICKET WPL

Red-hot RCB seal playoffs spot

Naik, Satghare headline Royal Challengers' 61-run win

VADODARA, PTI

Gautami Naik struck a fine half-century to steer Royal Challengers Bengaluru to a 61-run win over Gujarat Giants and ensure a top-three finish in the Women's Premier League here on Monday.

Unbeaten so far, RCB registered their fifth straight win in the tournament and became the first team to book a knockout berth.

Sent in to bat, table-toppers RCB didn't have the best of starts, losing Grace Harris and Georgia Voll inside the second over with the scoreboard reading just nine before Naik held the innings together to take RCB to a respectable 178 for six.

Chasing, GG never got their acts together from the word go, losing four wickets for 34 by the seventh over.

Beth Mooney, Sophie Devine, Anushka Sharma and Kanika Ahuja departed early.

Kshvee Gautam and Georgia Wareham too didn't help their side's cause.

Skipper Ashleigh Gardner (54 off 43 balls) and Bharti Fulmali (14) tried to resurrect their innings but failed.

Gardner struck five boundaries and one six during her knock but it was not enough as GG finished at 117 for 8.

Right-arm medium pacer Sayali Satghare continued her fine form and turned out to be the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3/21.

She was ably supported by Nadine de Klerk (2/17).

"Very happy. To get to 180 after the start we got, was a good effort. Very happy for Gautami. I think the attitude Gautami has had so far really stood out and today, her application was spot on. And for her to perform well without much experience, it was a very good effort," RCB captain Smriti Mandhana said after the game. "To play three high intensity matches in just four days, along with travel day is not easy. The message to the girls is to take a few days of break and come back."

Earlier, skipper Mandhana (26 off 23 balls) and Naik then joined hands and stitched together 60 runs for the third wicket to stabilise RCB's innings.

The partnership was cut short by Ashleigh Gardner, who caught Mandhana plumb in front of the wicket following a successful review.

Naik (73 off 55 balls, 7x4s, 1x6) and Richa Ghosh (27 off 20 balls) then stitched 69 runs for the fourth wicket to take RCB forward.

While Naik was the dominant player in the partnership, Ghosh used her long handle to great effect and smashed three sixes to compile 27 runs off 20 balls.

Naik's run finally came to an end in the 18th over, castled by Gardner.

Radha Yadav (17 off 8 balls) played short little cameo towards the end to propel RCB to the total.

Gujarat Giants made two changes with Anushka Sharma returning back and Happy Kumari making her debut.

Brief scores: 178/6 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 26, Gautami Naik 73, Richa Ghosh 27; Kashvee Gautam 2-38, Ashleigh Gardner 2-43) bt GG: 117/8 in 20 overs (Ashleigh Gardner 54; Sayali Satghare 3-21, Nadine de Klerk 2-17). **PoM:** Gautami Naik. **RCB's next match:** DC (Jan 24).

Gautami Naik scored a brisk 73 to help Royal Challengers Bengaluru beat Gujarat Giants by 61 runs in Vadodara on Monday. X

Women's Premier League Points Table

Teams	P	W	L	NRR	Pts
RCB (Q)	5	5	0	+1.882	10
MI	5	2	3	+0.151	4
UPW	5	2	3	-0.483	4
GG	5	2	3	-0.846	4
DC	4	1	3	-0.856	2

MI eye revival against DC

VADODARA, PTI: Defending champions Mumbai Indians will be desperate to arrest their slide and revive their campaign when they take on an equally struggling Delhi Capitals in a Women's Premier League match here on Tuesday.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led has managed just two wins from five outings so far and has looked off the pace for large parts of the season.

They began with a loss to Royal Challengers Bengaluru, before thrashing DC.

ICC gives Jan 21 ultimatum to BCB

Scotland could be named replacement if Ban don't budge

NEW DELHI, PTI

The ICC has asked the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to decide on its participation in the T20 World Cup in India by January 21 or "risk being replaced by another team" in the tournament beginning February 7.

Despite the back and forth between ICC and BCB, no solution has been found to the crisis that was triggered by the removal of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman from the 2026 Indian Premier League on BCCI's instructions for unspecified "developments all around".

"The BCB officials have been told to decide on the participation by January 21. If they refuse to travel to India, then they should be ready to be replaced by another team as per rankings," said an ICC source.

Citing security concerns and national pride, the BCB has announced that its national team won't be travelling to India for its group games in Kolkata and Mumbai.

However, with the event schedule already finalised, the ICC has shown reluctance to shift Bangladesh's games to co-host Sri Lanka, where the marquee India-Pakistan clash will be held as per the mutually agreed arrangement for ICC events till 2027.

In case Bangladesh continue to be unyielding, the replacement team would most likely be Scotland based on current rankings. Bangladesh are scheduled to play three leagues games in Kolkata and one in Mumbai.

The BCB has remained adamant on either a change of venue or a change of groups to facilitate its games in Sri Lanka.

Bangladesh are currently placed in Group C along with the West Indies, Italy, England and Nepal.

In their last meeting with ICC officials in Dhaka, the BCB proposed that Bangladesh be swapped with Ireland in Group B alongside Sri Lanka, Australia, Oman and Zimbabwe.

Such a move would allow the team to be based completely in Sri Lanka for all its league engagements.

"...the possibility of moving Bangladesh to a different group as a means of facilitating the matter with minimum logistical adjustments was discussed," the BCB had stated after the meeting on Saturday.

While the BCB considers it unsafe for its players to travel to India, ICC's risk assessment report does not flag any specific or direct threat.

IN BRIEF

KSCA trials for women's teams

▸ The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) will be conducting open selection trials to pick teams to participate in the selection matches (U-23 Women's One-day) at the KSCA B ground on January 25 from 9:00 am onwards, reports DHNS.

Interested girls are requested to report by 8:00 am in cricketing attire with a xerox copy of their birth certificate.

Girls below the age of 16 years will not be permitted to attend the trials.

Bhagat, Kadam win para gold

▸ India's Pramod Bhagat and Sukant Kadam clinched a gold medal each in the singles events of their respective categories and then combined together to stand on top of podium in doubles at the Egypt Para Badminton International 2026 in Cairo, reports PTI from New Delhi.

Bengaluru City bag gold

BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru City team won the gold medal in the Kayaking Dragon Boat Mixed team event with a time of 2:25.23 seconds at the Karnataka State Games.

Bengaluru Rural (2:34:09s) and Chitradurga (2:38:06s) bagged the silver and bronze medals respectively.

Sinha wins

Dakhshin Kannada's Prashanth Sinha won the gold medal in the men's 60kg category with a total lift of 236 kg in the weightlifting events of the .

The weightlifter lifted 101 kg snatch and another 135 kg in clean and jerk to take the top spot miles ahead of team-mate and silver medallist Kavan K (total: 195kg).

Football

Belagavi entered the semifinals of the men's football at the Mahatma Gandhi Stadium in Belagavi with a 3-2 win over Mysuru.

They will meet Uttara Kannada for a place in the final.

Kodagu and Mysuru will face each other in the other semifinal.

Basketball

Bank of Baroda got off to a good start with a 67-48 win over the Beagles in the men's basketball league match at Siddhartha Medical College grounds in Tumkuru. GST and Customs team trounced MNK Rao's 66-53 while Young Orians prevailed over DYES Bengaluru 46-28. Bharat Sports Union hammered Southern Blues 50-10.

In the women's section, DYES Mysuru edged DYES Vidyanagar 48-43 while Mandya got the better of Bharat Sports Union 52-28.

Select Results (Winners only, men): Kabaddi: Tumakuru; **TT:** Abhinav K Murthy.
Weightlifting: 60kg: Prashanth Sinha. **65kg:** Tippanna Lakkannavar. **71 kg:** Manjunath Marathi.
Women: Kabaddi: Dakshina Kannada; **TT:** Sahana H Murthy.
Weightlifting: 48kg: Shravya M. **53kg:** Lakshmi B. **58kg:** Swapna YG. **63kg:** Devika SG.
Mixed: Shooting: 10m air rifle: Kusuma PM, Himadvith KM. **10m air pistol:** Dvija Mohith Gowda, Kiran R.

Prashanth Sinha (centre) won the gold medal in the men's 60kg category of weightlifting.

Royals secure shootout win over HIL GC

BHUBANESHWAR, PTI: Ranchi Royals prevailed over HIL GC in the shootout after the two sides were locked 4-4 at the end of regulation time in the men's Hockey India League (HIL) here on Monday.

Ranchi Royals emerged 4-1 victorious in shootout at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium.

Araijeet Singh Hundal (19th, 32nd minutes), Sam Lane (42nd) and Tom Boon (57th) were the goal-scorers for Ranchi Royals while Lalit Kumar Upadhyay (25th, 53rd), Kane Russell (36th) and Sudeep Chirmako (39th) scored the goals for HIL GC

In the shootout, Vishnukant Singh, Sam Lane, Maxime van Oost and Tom Boon scored for the Royals.

Ranchi Royals started the game strong and made consecutive circle entries in the very first minute. Mandeep Singh was through but James Mazarelo made a crucial save.

Ministry steps in after IO fiasco

NEW DELHI, PTI

Taking note of the organisational lapses that plagued the India Open badminton tournament here, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya met officials of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Monday to discuss "corrective measures" that would prevent a repeat of the fiasco.

It is reliably learnt that the minister held a meeting with the stadium administrators, who were conspicuous by their absence during the tournament, and sought an explanation for the chaos last week.

The lapses have created a "perception crisis" for India in a potentially "make-or-break year" for the country's audacious 2036 Olympic bid.

Although Delhi's poor air quality was beyond its control, SAI is under tremendous pressure to explain incidents of bird poop in the field of play, a monkey in the spectators' stand, and poorly maintained facilities, including washrooms and training areas.

"The minister has taken note, and SAI will come up with details of corrective measures in the next few days," a well-placed source said.

Responsible for the stadium's upkeep, SAI has drawn heavy criticism for the chaos that became the talking point at the venue, which is also due to hold the badminton World Championships in August.

Danish shutter Mia Blichfeldt had described the conditions as unhealthy and wondered aloud as to how the marquee competition later this year could go ahead .

Mansukh Mandaviya

Davis brace in Snipers' win

BENGALURU, DHNS: Don Davis netted a brace while Elashib Thomas Mathew and Anand Ashok found the back of the net as Snipers FC eased to a comfortable 5-1 victory over RWF FC in the BDFA A Division League Championship at the Bangalore Football Stadium here on Monday.

Davis opened the scoring as early as the third minute to give Snipers FC a 1-0 advantage.

RWF FC Megshan Soman put the ball into his own net 18 minutes later to make it 2-0. Davis added another in the 27th minute for a 3-0 cushion.

Elashib and Anand scored a goal each in the second half to wrap up a solid 5-1 triumph.

Results: Snipers FC: 5 (Don Davis 3rd, 27th, Megshan Soman 19th own goal, Elashib Thomas Mathew 49th, Anand Ashok 67th) bt RWF FC: 1 (Rajesh S 67th); Bangalore Eagles FC: 2 (Myliemngap 87th, Rechanso Shimrah 90th+4); AGORC FC: 3 (Arun Pandey 47th, 85th, Santhosh S 62nd) bt DYES FC: 2 (Santhosh Tamata 20th, 38th).

Bengaluru's Srishti emerges champion

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru's Srishti Kiran was crowned the girls' singles champion at the ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors J30 tournament in Huamantla, Mexico, that was held from January 12 to 18.

The 13-year-old beat 17-year-old Tamara Herman of Mexico 6-4, 6-4 in the final to complete a hat-trick of ITF titles.

In the semifinal, she beat 16-year-old home favourite Miranda Sofia Escamilla Morales 6-4, 6-0.

Result: Final: Srishti Kiran (Ind) bt Tamara Herman (Mex) 6-4, 6-4.

Srishti Kiran

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

WPL: Delhi Capitals vs Mumbai Indians **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1**, **JioHotstar**.

U-19 World Cup: Bangladesh vs New Zealand, Australia vs Japan **(1:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network**, **Jio Hotstar**.

Cooch Behar Trophy: Gujarat vs MP, Day 4 **(9:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **JioHotstar**.

FOOTBALL

Champions League: Almaty vs Brugge **(9 pm)**, Bodo vs Man City **(11:15 pm)**, Inter vs Arsenal, Real Madrid vs Monaco, Tottenham vs Dortmund **(1:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

TENNIS

Australian Open: Day 3 **(5:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

HOCKEY

HIL: Hyderabad Toofans vs. HIL GC **(5 pm)**, Kalinga Lancers vs. JSW Soorma **(7:30 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

WRESTLING

PWL: Punjab vs Mumbai **(8 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

Transitioning Karnataka endure mixed white-ball fortunes

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

When Karnataka endured a humiliating Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, there were several instances when they seemed to have reached the cliff.

Five weeks and a Vijay Hazare Trophy semifinal later, the T20 campaign feels like a mere bump on the road, with the white-ball future looking better than it looked.

While Karnataka failed to go all the way in VHT as well, not all was gloom, as there was an air of invincibility in how they went about their business in the national one-day tournament. But for a team in transition, there are a few questions to answer.

Karnataka entered the VHT with a seemingly out-of-form Mayank Agarwal managing just 135 runs at an average of 19.28 in SMAT.

Agarwal hit two hundreds and two fifties, scoring 420 runs 46.66. He also shared three 100-plus run partnerships with Devdutt Padikkal, which included the highest chase in VHT history.

While it was on the back of Padikkal (725 runs at 90.62) that Karnataka produced a batting performance of the kind seldom seen, it also highlighted how much they depend on Agarwal at the top.

Despite the return of the reliable Karun Nair from Vidarbha, there have been a few warning signs from the fidgety middle-order of over-dependence on the right-hander.

And that was witnessed in the VHT, where he scored 412 runs, doing the repair job when there was a top-order malfunction.

In the seven games Karnataka lost across both white-ball competitions, not many have stepped up when these two failed. And that brings up the inevitable age and availability factors.

Two of the three top-run scorers in Karnataka's VHT campaign were 34-year-olds Karun and Agarwal. While these two are expected to get through at least a couple of seasons, the question is 'who's next?'.

With Padikkal flying with the Indian Test squad and looking to break into the one-day side on the back of stellar performances, Karnataka might not have the luxury to shoulder their batting responsibilities on him.

Smaran R's performances in both red and white-ball cricket have been significant. He has looked the most assured batter in the middle-order and has runs to back the talent. He was the highest run-getter for Karnataka in SMAT, making 319 at 63.80, but couldn't carry on the momentum in VHT before getting injured.

Shrijith KL, already 29, scored 175 runs at 43.75, with two fifties in VHT, including one in the semifinal. While his contributions have showcased value, the consistency is missing.

Since the exit of CM Gautam, Karnataka have struggled to find a reliable wicketkeeper-batter.

Karnataka might have also found a batter capable of batting in the top six and bowling off-spin when needed.

Dhruv Prabhakar has so far played two games, walking in to bat in pressure situations, and has done a decent job.

On the bowling front, Karnataka's issues are centered on form. After a sub-par SMAT, Vidwath Kaverappa's impact remained insignificant, and Vyshak Vijaykumar struggled for consistency.

Both lacked penetration with the new ball and failed to take wickets at crucial junctures, picking only five wickets apiece in five games in VHT.

However, Karnataka are lucky with their fast bowling depth. Youngsters Abhilash Shetty and Vidyadhar Patil have played important jroles, carrying the pace attack when their senior pros struggled.

Abhilash (17) was Karnataka's leading wicket-taker in VHT while Patil has showcased immense promise, picking up 19 wickets across two white-ball competitions this season.

Another shining light in Karnataka's campaign was Shreesha Achar, who showed strong awareness in his own game and the willingness to stick to it when under pressure.

He nicely complemented veteran Shreyas Gopal and has picked up seven wickets in six List A games.

All in all, for a team in transition, the groundwork for the new generation to take off seems to have commenced.

Devdutt Padikkal was the standout performer for Karnataka in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, scoring 725 runs in nine matches.
DH PHOTO/ KRISHNAKUMAR PS

Printed and published by B A Ravi on behalf of The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, at The Printers (Mysore) Private Ltd, Plot nos. 7-12, Kumbalgodu Industrial Area, Bengaluru - 560 074. Executive Editor: K V Subramanya (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act). Editorial Office: 75, M.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560 001. E-mail: editor@deccanherald.co.in. Phone: 080-45557333, Editorial: 080-45557279/080-45557280, Circ: 080-45557204, Advt: 080-45557163/080-45557164. Also printed at Hubballi-Dharwad, Mangaluru, Kalaburagi, Davangere, Mysuru and Hosapete. © All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. RNI No 3608/57. Registered, Regn. No: KRNA/BGE/1027/2023-2025, posted at Bangalore PSO, Mysore Road, Bengaluru - 560 026. Website: www.printersmysore.com